LOCAL AND REGIONAL IDENTITY
ACTION PLAN

THE THOMPSON ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION WORKING GROUP
CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT  January 2013
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group

The need to broaden and diversify the economic base in Thompson and surrounding region is a long-standing priority. Economic volatility in recent years, coupled with the November 2010 announcement that Vale will transition its operations in Thompson to mining and milling by 2015, have underlined the need for the City, the region and community partners to tackle this issue head on.

The Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group (TEDWG) was formed to spearhead this effort. Launched on May 18, 2011, the TEDWG has a simple mission: to accelerate Thompson’s development as a regional service centre in Northern Manitoba with a strong mining pillar. The TEDWG is chaired by the City of Thompson, and enjoys broad and diverse stakeholder participation with representatives from the Province of Manitoba, Vale, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), Keewatin Tribal Council (KTC), Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF), the Northern Association of Community Councils (NACC), Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN), Thompson Unlimited, and the Thompson Chamber of Commerce. The Government of Canada has also been invited to participate. TEDWG is being support by rePlan, a Canadian planning organization that works with resource-based communities in Canada and internationally.

This group is responsible for identifying and pursuing the most promising opportunities to help Thompson and the surrounding region diversify its economy and strengthen its position as an economic contributor in Northern Manitoba. Priority areas identified by TEDWG stakeholders include:

- Restorative Justice
- Education and Training
- Housing
- Fostering a Local and Regional Identity
- Economic Development

Sub-committees, including representatives of the above mentioned organizations as well as other regional stakeholders, have been established to address these priority areas and prepare plans that support immediate action.

In addition, the TEDWG stakeholders are committed to strengthening the City of Thompson’s governance framework through an updated District Development Plan and Zoning By-Law. The dynamic relationship between the City of Thompson and regional communities will be better defined through another initiative of the TEDWG, the Thompson and Region Infrastructure Plan (TRIP). When taken together, the District Development Plan, Zoning By-Law and Thompson and Region Infrastructure Plan provide a 20-year strategy to stimulate and manage both economic and population growth through targeted infrastructure development and sustainable land use planning in Thompson and region.

The TEDWG process will provide immediate direction on specific priorities, such as fostering a local and regional identity. It will also provide a framework for continued collaboration between regional stakeholders and continued action to support economic diversification and development over the long term.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

The Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group has identified Local and Regional Identity as a priority area for action when addressing barriers to economic development and fostering new economic activities. This Consultation Summary Report provides a comprehensive overview of the stakeholder consultation undertaken prior to the development of a Place Branding Strategy for the City of Thompson. The Report summarizes the key themes emerging from consultation activities and outlines recommendations for the Place Branding Strategy as well as next steps and future projects.

1.3 A Note on Language

This Report includes input from many diverse sources. As such, the perspectives expressed in the summaries of Place Branding Survey and Focus Group findings are varied and do not necessarily reflect those of Advisory Committee members. The Report aims to accurately and fairly reflect the full range of input received in order to support the development of a Place Branding Strategy. In some cases this input is negative or derogatory towards certain groups.

In addition, to ensure the data collected through the Place Branding Survey is comparable to other data sets (i.e. Census data), the Advisory Committee has aligned its data categories with the ones used by Statistics Canada. Regarding the labels applied to ethnic groups (e.g. White, Black, etc.), the Advisory Committee does not wish to reinforce any negative stereotypes associated with these labels.

1.4 Area of Study

The area of study for the stakeholder consultation portion of the Place Branding Strategy includes the City of Thompson and surrounding region. The boundaries of the surrounding region were defined by the Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group and are highlighted in Figure 1.1 seen at left. The final Place Branding Strategy will be a City Council-adopted plan and apply within the municipal boundary of the City of Thompson. Partnerships and ongoing consultation with communities in the Thompson Region will be encouraged in the Place Branding Strategy.
1.5 Engagement Process

To ensure that this work represents the interests, needs and goals of all stakeholders in the Thompson Region, a sub-committee for Local and Regional Identity was established as part of the TEDWG process. This sub-committee comprised a diverse group of organizations and individuals who have expertise, work in, or have an interest in this priority area. The sub-committee met regularly from January to September 2012. The sub-committee was instrumental in identifying the need for and designing the Place Branding Strategy process, in addition to identifying other issues related to local and regional identity to be addressed in future projects.

Sub-Committee members represented a number of local and regional organizations including:

- City of Thompson
- Community Futures North Central Development
- Futures/Marymound North
- Keewatin Tribal Council
- Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
- Manitoba Housing
- Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak
- Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
- Northern Manitoba Sector Council
- Royal Bank of Canada
- School District of Mystery Lake
- Spirit Way Inc.
- Thompson Boreal Discovery Centre
- Thompson Chamber of Commerce
- Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation
- Thompson Unlimited
- Vale

In October 2012, the Local and Regional Advisory Committee was formed. The Advisory Committee is a diverse group of stakeholders and individuals with an interest in or organizational capacity to develop a Place Branding Strategy. The Advisory Committee will provide direction to the Place Branding consulting team for the duration of the project. The roles and responsibilities of Advisory Committee members are outlined in the Terms of Reference for the Committee, as seen in Appendix A.

The work plan for the Place Branding Strategy includes a comprehensive Stakeholder and Community Engagement Program. Advisory Committee members emphasized the need for a variety of engagement activities to ensure the participation of as many people in the city and the region as possible. In order to reach the broadest possible audience, the engagement program includes four levels:

- Level 1 Engagement - Education and Outreach (to Organizations, Institutions, Agencies)
- Level 2 Engagement - Link to Existing Activities (community networks, organizations, meetings/conferences)
- Level 3 Engagement - High-Level Public Outreach (Open Houses, workshops, booth at the Mall, etc.)
- Level 4 Engagement - Group-Specific Public Outreach (Youth, Elders, Business Community, the disengaged, etc.)

Advisory Committee members placed particular emphasis on the need for Level 4 Engagement to ensure the varied perspectives of different groups were captured. Level 4 Engagement typically took the form of Focus Groups. Detailed findings of the Focus Group sessions are included in Section 3.2 of this report.

Due to the diversity of stakeholders in the City of Thompson and surrounding region, the Advisory Committee provided guidance to the consulting team on the need for a clear, highly visual and participatory approach to the production and presentation of community engagement materials.
Figure 1.2 - Flip chart notes from an early Local and Regional Identity Sub-Committee meeting identifying the relationship between culture, tourism/visitors and place.

Figure 1.3 - Flip chart notes from an early Local and Regional Identity Sub-Committee meeting outlining the approach to the Place Branding Strategy. This report is a summary of the activities undertaken as part of Phase 1 or “community building through engagement,” as outlined on the flip chart to the left.
## SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES, AUGUST - DECEMBER 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Activity</th>
<th>Organization / Audience</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation and Place Branding Survey</strong></td>
<td>• Northern Association of Community Councils (NACC), Annual General Meeting</td>
<td>August 15, 2012</td>
<td>• Community Council representatives from 50 NACC Member Communities</td>
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<td><strong>Place Branding Website, Facebook and Twitter accounts</strong></td>
<td>• Stakeholder Organizations</td>
<td>Late August 2012</td>
<td>• General Public</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• General Public</td>
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<td>• Stakeholder Organizations</td>
<td>Late August 2012</td>
<td>• 336 surveys completed by December 2012</td>
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<td><strong>City of Thompson Council Updates</strong></td>
<td>• City of Thompson Council</td>
<td>August - November 2012</td>
<td>• Mayor and Council</td>
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<td><strong>Council and Sub-Committee Workshop</strong></td>
<td>• City of Thompson Council</td>
<td>September 13, 2012</td>
<td>• Mayor and Council Sub-Committee Members</td>
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<td>• Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy</td>
<td>October 23, 2012</td>
<td>• TUAS Steering Committee Members</td>
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<td>• Futures/Marymound</td>
<td>October 23, 2012</td>
<td>• Futures clients</td>
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<td>• Thompson Senior Community Resource Council</td>
<td>October 23, 2012</td>
<td>• TSCRC members</td>
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<td>• Settlement Services (Community Futures North Central Development)</td>
<td>October 24, 2012</td>
<td>• Settlement Services Clients and Coordinator</td>
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<td>• Thompson Unlimited</td>
<td>October 26, 2012</td>
<td>• TU Board Members</td>
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<td>• Thompson Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>October 27, 2012</td>
<td>• Chamber Members</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (#1)</td>
<td>October 29, 2012</td>
<td>• TNRC Staff and Board Members</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak</td>
<td>October 30, 2012</td>
<td>• MKO Staff Members</td>
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### SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES, AUGUST - DECEMBER 2012

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<th>Participants</th>
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<td><strong>Focus Groups, Cont’d.</strong></td>
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<td>• Vale</td>
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<td>October 30, 2012</td>
<td>• Vale Staff Members</td>
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<td>• School District of Mystery Lake</td>
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<td>October 30, 2012</td>
<td>• Superintendent, High School Principal and Vice-Principal, Elementary School Principals and Vice- Principals</td>
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<td>• Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (#2)</td>
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<td>October 30, 2012</td>
<td>• TNRC Staff, Board Members and Community Partners</td>
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<td>• Northern Regional Health Authority</td>
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<td>October 31, 2012</td>
<td>• NRHA Staff Members</td>
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<tr>
<td>• R.D. Parker Collegiate Youth Aboriginal Council</td>
<td></td>
<td>October 31, 2012</td>
<td>• YAC Members</td>
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<td>• Keewatin Tribal Council</td>
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<td>November 19, 2012</td>
<td>• KTC Staff Members</td>
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<td>• R.D. Parker Collegiate Student Council</td>
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<td>November 20, 2012</td>
<td>• Student Council Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thompson Regional Airport Authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>November 20, 2012</td>
<td>• TRAA Board Members</td>
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2. PLACE BRANDING SURVEY

2.1 Survey Methodology

A Place Branding Survey was developed to understand the experience of residents and visitors in the City of Thompson. The survey questionnaire was developed through a collaborative process that relied on sub-committee members for their local and regional expertise. Once finalized, hardcopy and on-line versions of the survey were made publicly available in late August 2012. The on-line survey will continue to be available until March 2013. The survey questionnaire is included in Appendix B to this report. Sub-committee and Advisory Committee members were instrumental in ensuring the participation of the members of their respective organizations – as well as the general public – in the survey. By December 31, 2012, a total of 336 people had responded to the survey.

It is important to note that the survey was not designed as a rigorous tool, and survey results do not represent a statistically significant sample of the total population of the Thompson Region. As well, survey results do not represent demographic trends in the City of Thompson as identified in the 2011 Census. Instead, the quantitative results of the survey identify some general trends in areas such as residency status, ranking of Thompson’s characteristics and demographic indicators. The survey also gathered valuable qualitative data that indicates general attitudes towards the benefits and challenges of living in Thompson.

The results of the survey provide a simple ‘snapshot’ of the city prior to the development of the Place Branding Strategy. The survey can be administered again as the Place Branding Strategy is implemented to track any changes in perceptions or attitudes over time.

2.2 General Findings

The following sections include a summary of findings from the survey. In each graph or chart, the number of people who answered is clearly indicated. In some cases, respondents have not answered all survey questions. To address the issue of ‘skipped’ questions, the analysis of findings was conducted using responses received to each question, not the total number of surveys collected. For example, if 330 respondents answered Question 10, all analysis was based on 330 (not 336) as the denominator.

Throughout this report, the summary of survey findings is supplemented by additional Census data from Statistics Canada, originally analyzed in support of other Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group (TEDWG) plans.

Appendix C of this report includes demographic mapping, similar to the maps shown in Figures 2.7 and 2.8 below, completed for the City of Thompson. All maps are based on 2006 Census data. These maps clearly indicate Thompson’s diversity across ethnic, income, educational and other key indicators. As noted previously, this diversity was not captured in the results of the Place Branding Survey.
2.2.1 Summary Profile of Respondents

Thompson and the surrounding region have one of the youngest and fastest growing populations in Canada. Census data indicates that in the City of Thompson, the median age is 30 (see Figure 2.7). The regional population is younger, with a median age of 24. While survey respondents represent a range of age groups, the majority (75%) are between the ages of 25 and 54. The younger end of that range – people aged 25 to 34 – make up 27% of survey respondents.

The majority of survey respondents were female (63%). This majority is disproportionate to the more balanced gender profile of the City of Thompson indicated in the latest Census. A higher number of female survey respondents could indicate, among other things, a general bias in the way the survey was distributed, greater interest in the subject matter, or greater household decision-making power among women.

The majority of survey respondents also indicated they were married or in a common-law relationship (70%). Only 17% of survey respondents were single. Taken together with the age and marital status data provided by respondents, these findings indicate that a majority of survey respondents have young families. These findings also indicate lower survey participation rates among residents and visitors who are single, including single parents and young male contract workers.

Twenty-eight percent of respondents indicated a college diploma or certificate as the highest level of education attained. Equal numbers of respondents (20%) indicated a high school diploma/GED/CEGEP or an undergraduate degree as the highest level of education attained. Higher levels of educational attainment are related to income levels reported by survey respondents. Twenty-one percent of respondents reported an annual income of between $100,000 and $149,999, with 15% reporting incomes higher than $150,000 per year. While there was a well-balanced response across all other income groups, these findings indicate that the survey did not have a high rate of participation from those in lower income brackets. Consistent with responses regarding income levels, 74% of respondents indicated they were employed full-time.

The majority (57%) of survey respondents indicated that they were white, followed by 19% indicating First Nations identity and 13% indicating Metis identity. Proportional to the demographic composition of the City of Thompson and surrounding region in the Census (see Figure 2.8), Aboriginal people are underrepresented in the survey findings. Few respondents reported belonging to another ethnic group. When taken together, only 11% of survey respondents indicated membership in other ethnic groups.

Respondents reported high levels of education. Higher levels of education are likely related to income levels.

Most respondents (74%) are employed full-time, indicating a strong job market in Thompson.

Close to 60% of survey respondents identified themselves as White. Approximately 34% of respondents identified as Aboriginal. The most recent Canadian Census indicates that 47% of the City of Thompson’s population identifies as Aboriginal.
Figure 2.7 - Average Age of the Population in the City of Thompson, Census 2006.
Figure 2.8 - Percentage of the Population with Aboriginal Identity in the City of Thompson, Census 2006.
2.2.2 Summary of Survey Responses

This section provides a summary of all survey responses received. Sections 2.4 and 2.5 below provide further detail on the responses received from specific groups (e.g. full-time residents only, etc.).

The majority of survey respondents (65%) are full-time residents of the City of Thompson. The next most frequent responses came from former residents and regular visitors to Thompson, with each group representing 13% of survey respondents.

On a scale of one to five, where one represents “very weak” and five represents “very strong,” respondents indicated natural surroundings as the strongest characteristic of the City of Thompson (with an average rating of 4.3). Other high-ranking characteristics include the job market (3.6), recreation (3.3), education and training (3.1), and health and wellness (2.9). Figure 2.9 indicates the average ranking for all 15 characteristics included in the survey.

Of the characteristics they ranked, respondents were also asked to indicate the City of Thompson’s strongest characteristic overall. Reponses to this question were generally consistent with the rankings, with natural surroundings selected as the city’s strongest characteristic by 55% of respondents. Other responses included the job market (18%), recreation (7%), education and training (6%), and community pride (5%).

Importantly, when asked to identify Thompson’s weakest characteristic, respondents identified some of the key areas in which the Thompson and Economic Diversification Working Group (TEDWG) has undertaken other Action Plans to address challenges and issues. These areas include crime prevention and safety (26%), housing options (18%), community pride (15%), entertainment options (10%), and services and amenities (6%).

When asked what they like best about Thompson, respondents indicated a wide range of characteristics, activities and lifestyle features. Overall, responses were consistent with the responses collected during Focus Group sessions (summarized in Section 3.0). The majority of respondents referenced the beauty of Thompson’s natural surroundings as a reason for living in the community. Lifestyle features such as short commutes to work, school and recreational activities, as well as the “small town” friendliness of community members were frequently identified as positive attributes. A number of respondents shared aspirational, or forward-looking comments. The two characteristics most commonly cited by these respondents were, broadly, Thompson’s “potential” and growing cultural diversity. Representative comments include:

- “[I like] that it is growing and has potential. But for most northerners, grabbing a coffee and passing through it is what is best about Thompson.”
- “Thompson is very close to many outdoor activities such as fishing, camping and other activities in the forest. There also is an abundance of Aboriginal culture, which is one of the secrets of the city.”
- “Thompson has so much potential to be a great city. If it were cleaner and in good repair (roads, sidewalks, etc.) it has the makings of a beautiful northern town and the addition of things like the Spirit Way and Millennium Trail add lovely local flavour and interest to the area.”

Survey respondents also provided comments on what they liked the least about Thompson. An overwhelming majority of respondents noted crime, community safety, gangs, public intoxication, and the deteriorated state of the downtown area in their responses. Many also indicated the city’s homeless population; however, comments on this issue were divided into two distinct groups. Some people identified the presence of the homeless population in the downtown area as the driving force behind most criminal activity and negative perceptions of Thompson, while others identified the need for better services and programs to address the systemic causes of homelessness (e.g. mental health and substance abuse issues). There was very limited overlap of perceptions between these groups.

Other specific areas of concern include lack of childcare (and a general lack of services, including grocery stores), racist attitudes, lack of affordable housing options, high property taxes, and a poor service culture. In addition to specific concerns, respondents also highlighted a more general sense of apathy and limited vision for the future. Representative comments include:

- “The cloud of apathy that seems to hover around us all the time. Everybody complains about the problems we have, but nobody wants to do anything about it. Whenever good programs, professionals, speakers, entertainers, etc. take the time to come here, they receive a cool response. But then people complain how there is too much crime, not enough youth programming, no entertainment, etc.”
- “Although we have a large number of people coming to our community, they are not taking the challenge and investing in the community. There are opportunities for people to step up and do something to make the community better. Too often the expectation is that ‘government’ should do something about a problem. People have a tough time seeing the opportunities and taking on the challenge of making things better.”

When asked to choose three words or phrases that describe the City of Thompson, 67% of respondents identified the city as “Northern” (see Figure 2.10). Other responses included natural beauty (56%), service hub (36%), growing (19%) and diverse (19%). Importantly, 10% of respondents entered “Other” and filled in their own word or phrase, all of which were negative.
Survey respondents ranked Thompson's natural surroundings as its strongest characteristic. The city's job market also ranked highly.

Survey respondents described Thompson as a naturally beautiful Northern service hub.

Figure 2.9 - Characteristics of Thompson, ranked from “very weak” (1) to “very strong” (5) (total=331)

Figure 2.10 - Percentage of Respondents describing characteristics of Thompson (total=321)
2.3 Full-Time Residents and Frequent Visitors

As noted above, 65% of survey respondents identified themselves as full-time residents of the City of Thompson. Approximately 60% of full-time residents who responded to the survey have lived in Thompson for 10 or more years. However, 49% of full-time residents indicated that they do not see themselves living in Thompson within the next 10 years, citing issues such as an uncertain job market, a desire to retire to a location closer to family, wanting greater opportunities for their children, and the “decline” of the city as reasons for leaving. Those who do plan to stay in Thompson identified reasons for staying, including employment opportunities, and that the city is “home.” In fact, full-time residents viewed the job market more favourably than frequent visitors to Thompson.

Figure 2.15 indicates that frequent visitors to Thompson rank all characteristics of the city – with the exception of natural surroundings and the job market – higher than full-time residents. This could be indicative of Thompson’s role as a service hub and provides some insight into the reasons why people travel to the city from other areas. Importantly, education and training received the second highest ranking among frequent visitors yet only 6% of respondents indicated they came to Thompson to access educational opportunities. The reason to come to Thompson most cited by visitors to the city was visiting friends or relatives (42%). This was followed by short-term business travel (34%) and shopping (30%) (see Figure 2.14).

When asked what they like best about Thompson, frequent visitors focused on the services, amenities and shopping available in the city. Full-time residents were more inclined to comment on qualities such as the area’s natural beauty, the city’s “small town” atmosphere, the number of recreational activities available, and the ease of getting around. Among full-time residents, crime and community safety were most frequently cited as the worst aspects of the city. Many also commented on the general “decline” of the city, evidenced by issues such as garbage/litter, “small town politics,” “hidden racism,” and limited retail options. Visitors to the city commented primarily on limited retail options, a poor customer service culture, and a feeling of being unsafe in the downtown area.

2.4 Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Respondents

Forty-eight percent of Aboriginal respondents are full-time residents of Thompson, compared to 27% who identified themselves as regular visitors to the city. A majority of non-Aboriginal respondents are full-time residents of Thompson (75%), with very few identifying as regular visitors (3%). Fifteen percent of non-Aboriginal respondents were former residents of Thompson.

Figure 2.16 indicates that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents rank characteristics of Thompson generally the same. However, in the case of characteristics such as housing and job market, there is a marked difference in responses, with Aboriginal respondents ranking opportuni-
Across all characteristics except natural surroundings, housing options and the job market, frequent visitors ranked Thompson higher than full-time residents.

Figure 2.15 - Characteristics of Thompson, ranked from “very weak” (1) to “very strong” (5). This chart compares rankings between full-time residents and frequent visitors.

Across all characteristics except natural surroundings, housing options and the job market, Aboriginal respondents ranked Thompson higher than non-Aboriginal respondents.

Figure 2.16 - Characteristics of Thompson, ranked from “very weak” (1) to “very strong” (5). This chart compares rankings between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents.
ties in these areas lower than non-Aboriginal respondents. Conversely, Aboriginal respondents ranked education and training opportunities considerably higher than non-Aboriginal respondents.

When asked about Thompson's strongest characteristic, non-Aboriginal respondents indicated the job market, while Aboriginal respondents identified the city's natural surroundings, closely followed by education and training opportunities. Thompson's weakest characteristic according to Aboriginal respondents was its housing options. Non-Aboriginal respondents identified crime prevention, closely followed by community pride and housing options.

Employment and housing opportunities may have an impact on or be related to income. Comparing the average income of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents shows that while Aboriginal respondents are represented across all income categories (with the exception of $10,000 to $19,999), significantly fewer Aboriginal respondents report an average income of $100,000 or higher. Among Aboriginal respondents, 22% report an average income of $100,000 or higher, whereas 49% of non-Aboriginal respondents fall in the same category (see Figure 2.17).

Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents who are full-time residents of Thompson were asked whether they see themselves living in the city 10 years from now (Figures 2.19 and 2.20). While the majority of both groups indicated that they did not see themselves living in Thompson (51% non-Aboriginal, 40% Aboriginal), those with Aboriginal identity answered “Don’t Know” almost as often (39%). Among Aboriginal respondents, uncertainty about whether to remain in Thompson over the longer-term was characterized in the following ways:

- “It depends on if we agree with the direction the city is moving in and if the career opportunities remain.”
- “Have to wait and see if all my needs are met.”

Non-Aboriginal respondents tended to indicate an uncertain/shifting job market or an interest in retiring closer to family as their reason for not seeing Thompson as a long-term home. Representative responses include:

- “I will need to see what is going to happen with Vale. Will I continue to have employment to support my family? It is becoming very expensive to live in Thompson.”
- “I am retired and looking to return to area closer to family.”
- “Work and family may keep us in Thompson. We may retire in Thompson should the city continue to expand and develop in positive ways. Post-secondary educational opportunities for our children are also a key issue.”
3. FOCUS GROUPS

3.1 Purpose of Focus Groups
The findings of the Place Branding Survey, detailed in previous sections of this report, paint a broad picture of the sentiments and experiences of visitors to and residents of the City of Thompson. The survey was intentionally designed to target a wide audience in order to provide a general baseline prior to the development of a Place Branding Strategy for the city. As noted previously, the results of the survey clearly show a bias toward respondents who are residents of the city, between the ages of 25 and 34, with higher education and income levels than the regional average. These respondents also have easy access to the Internet. In order to counteract this bias and in the interest of balancing the perspectives gathered through the survey with those of a more diverse group of visitors and residents, Focus Group sessions were carried out with over a two-month period in October and November 2012. A total of 16 Focus Groups were conducted with the following organizations:

- Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy
- Futures/Marymound
- Thompson Senior Community Resource Council
- Settlement Services (Community Futures North Central Development)
- Thompson Unlimited
- Thompson Chamber of Commerce
- Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (#1)
- Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak
- Vale
- School District of Mystery Lake
- Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (#2)
- Northern Regional Health Authority
- R.D. Parker Collegiate Youth Aboriginal Council
- Keewatin Tribal Council
- R.D. Parker Collegiate Student Council
- Thompson Regional Airport Authority

Focus Group participants both verified and provided additional context and commentary on the findings of the Place Branding survey. Perspectives that were particularly underrepresented in the survey, including those of youth and seniors, were also captured through Focus Group discussions.

3.2 Summary of Focus Group Findings
Focus Group sessions were structured around the following four discussion questions:

1. What do you think of when you hear the word “Thompson”?
2. What are some of the benefits/positives about life in Thompson?
3. What are some of the negatives/challenges about life in Thompson?
4. What is your vision for the City of Thompson in the next 10 years?

Importantly, across all Focus Groups, there was clear consensus on the themes emerging from the discussion of these questions. However, each group provided a different perspective on these common themes.

What do you think of when you hear the word “Thompson”?
This question was designed to elicit an immediate response from Focus Group participants. Themes emerging from the discussion of this question include:

Location/Geography: Most participants identified Thompson’s remote location as one of the city’s defining features. Some participants viewed the city’s location as an asset, while others thought of it as a limitation. Youth and seniors were more inclined to characterize Thompson’s location as a drawback. Youth cited a lack of access to other communities for educational and employment opportunities as a challenge. Seniors had similar comments, but were more focused on the lack of access to family members (specifically grandchildren), and health care services.

Participants from Aboriginal organizations representing regional communities were less inclined to characterize Thompson as remote or isolated, primarily due to the service centre/hub role the city plays for surrounding regional communities. Similar comments came from those engaged in providing transportation/logistics and health care services. For these participants, Thompson’s location provides a strategic advantage for service provision across Northern Manitoba. Other participants, particularly those engaged in the tourism and business development sectors, thought Thompson’s location could provide unique opportunities to tourists and business owners/investors and should be promoted as an asset.

Climate: All participants commented on Thompson’s climate. In many cases, the cold and snowy winter weather was the first thought that came to mind when describing the city. While some participants see Thompson’s climate as an opportunity for investment (e.g. the cold weather testing industry), many identified the winter climate as a deterrent to newer residents considering whether to settle in Thompson permanently. However, participants indicated that winter sports such as snowmobiling, skiing, and ice fishing could be better marketed to a niche group of visitors and tourists who may come to Thompson specifically...
“I like the proximity to nature. Being able to access the outdoors so easily really improves my quality of life.”
to experience its winter climate.

**Natural Environment:** More than any other characteristic, Focus Group participants identified Thompson’s natural environment as its most important asset. This supports the findings of the Place Branding Survey, in which a majority of respondents ranked Thompson’s natural surroundings as the city’s strongest characteristic. Many participants thought that the value of the city and region’s natural environment could be more clearly defined and celebrated in marketing and promotional materials.

A number of participants also commented on the need for improving public access to natural areas, particularly for groups that do not have the means to access them privately (e.g., through cottage ownership, having a boat, etc.). In particular, participants felt that new Canadians would benefit from increased access to the natural environment as a means to gaining an expanded understanding of northern culture. Aboriginal organizations and Futures clients emphasized the need for improved and affordable public access (e.g., organized bus trips to Paint Lake), particularly for single parents.

**Crime:** Similar to the city’s natural environment, all participants commented on the level of crime or criminal behaviour in Thompson. Perspectives on the causes of and solutions for dealing with crime varied widely. Most participants focused on the geography of crime in the city, indicating that the majority of criminal behaviour occurred in the city’s downtown area. While some participants discussed the need to “move the problem” (e.g., relocate the Homeless Shelter and the Liquor Mart to areas outside of the downtown), many others identified the root socio-economic causes of criminal behaviour. In many cases, the discussion of “crime” was linked to a discussion of homelessness, substance abuse, and public intoxication, and some participants were unable to differentiate criminality from homelessness.

Aboriginal youth participants were candid about the reality of gang activity in the city and many had safety concerns related to gang activity. Other participants noted that they actively avoid the downtown area due to a perceived lack of safety in the area. The less first-hand experience participants had downtown, the more likely they were to have a negative perception of the area.

Some participants also indicated that high levels of disposable income in the community contribute to increased drug-related crime, particularly among young people who are “passing through” Thompson on short-term contracts.

**Cultural Diversity:** While many participants indicated Thompson’s cultural diversity as an asset, a number of participants identified it as a point of contention within the city. The city’s ability to embrace its shifting demographic profile was seen by Aboriginal and other community service organizations to be a key measure of its future success and sustainability.

**Opportunity:** Many participants noted that Thompson offers opportunities not available in other cities of the same size and geographic location. Opportunities in the job market, for career advancement, and for education were the most commonly stated across all Focus Groups. While all groups agreed these opportunities were present in the city, Aboriginal organizations, Aboriginal youth and community service organizations pointed out that these opportunities were inaccessible to them or their clients. This inaccessibility was attributed to a range of issues from the skills gap faced by some potential employees to prejudice among employers. Non-Aboriginal youth thought Thompson offered more limited educational and employment opportunities than other cities, noting that they were planning to leave the community after high school to pursue their educational goals. Economic development and business organizations identified the need to promote the opportunities available in Thompson to a broader audience outside of the city to encourage in-migration of skilled workers and outside investors.

**Sense of Community:** Participants often described Thompson as a welcoming and friendly place; however, the sense of community that participants felt within the city varied among groups. While each group identified a sense of community within their own cultural, ethnic, language or social group, most participants noted that the city lacks a broader, cohesive sense of community. Some participants thought this was due to the demographic transition Thompson is currently undergoing, as the city’s Aboriginal and immigrant communities continue to grow and a new sense of community emerges.

**What are some of the benefits/positives about life in Thompson?**

**Lifestyle:** Participants reported numerous lifestyle benefits of living in Thompson. All groups commented on the benefit of having housing, work and recreational opportunities in such close proximity to one another. Many commented on how important the short driving distance from home to work and the lack of traffic in the city were to their quality of life. All groups also commented on the proximity of the city to its natural surroundings. A number of participants gave the example of being able to drive from Thompson to Paint Lake within half an hour as a major lifestyle benefit.

**Recreational Opportunities:** Thompson has a very active recreation sector, with many options available to meet the needs of residents and visitors alike. Participants saw recreational opportunities as a vehicle for becoming more engaged in the community and building lasting friendships. Aboriginal and community service organizations pointed out that the high cost of some organized recreational activities in Thompson (e.g., hockey) is a barrier to participation for lower-income residents. Recreational opportunities were very closely linked to the “lifestyle” benefit described above, and participants who are engaged in tourism, recruitment and business development felt that this link should be better promoted.
Advancement Opportunities (education, career, investment): Many participants felt that opportunities for advancement in areas such as education, career and business investment were more available in Thompson than other communities of a similar size. Access to post-secondary education and the job market was viewed to be very open by some participants. However, many others identified the barriers to accessing advancement opportunities in the city, including lack of support for Aboriginal people and newcomers.

Proximity to Nature: A key component of the “lifestyle” described above is the city’s proximity to nature. Similar to comments made about access to recreational opportunities, many participants felt that residents of Thompson take the city’s proximity to nature for granted and therefore do not adequately promote the city’s natural surroundings to potential visitors.

Progressive Community: While many participants thought that the city – both as a corporation and as a community – could and should be more progressive in terms of the cultural values and attitudes it supports, a number of participants highlighted the positive steps many individual community members, organizations and the City itself have taken towards making Thompson a more progressive community. In general, non-Aboriginal participants viewed Thompson as a more progressive community than their Aboriginal counterparts. Many Aboriginal participants pointed to systemic issues including racism, lack of adequate housing and lack of education and training for skilled jobs as barriers to Thompson being a progressive and inclusive community for Aboriginal people.

Although these barriers persist, participants pointed to evidence of positive change within the community, including ongoing implementation of the Thompson Aboriginal Accord and increased partnerships between Aboriginal organizations and industry. When understood in economic rather than cultural terms, many participants saw Thompson as a progressive community, noting that the city’s strong job market made it an attractive place for young people to advance both career and family goals.

Aboriginal Culture and Multiculturalism: While Aboriginal culture and multiculturalism are distinct topics, a discussion of one was usually linked to a discussion of the other during focus group sessions. In this discussion, many participants identified three distinct cultural groups in the City of Thompson: “white,” “Aboriginal” and “multicultural.” The term “multicultural” was most often applied to new Canadians who are also visible minorities. Aboriginal participants were more likely to advocate for the Aboriginal culture of Thompson and the region to be specifically identified and celebrated rather than included as one of many cultures under the “multicultural” category. Importantly, those who advocated this approach emphasized the inclusive nature of Aboriginal culture, noting that there needs to be space in Thompson for a broader discussion of culture and cultural understanding between groups. Many participants came to similar conclusions about the need for better understanding and closer collaboration between groups, albeit from different perspectives.

Focus Group participants also raised the need for the celebration of other specific cultures within the city. Some participants wanted to see greater attention paid to the “pioneer” culture of Thompson and those who established the townsite of Thompson in the late 1950s. Others thought that more opportunities for residents and visitors to learn about the culture of more recent immigrants, particularly those from south-east Asia, would support greater community cohesion.

Focus Group discussions provided many insights on the topic of culture, two of which are integral to the development of a Place Branding Strategy for the City of Thompson. The first is that Thompson is currently in the midst of a cultural transition due, in part, to an ongoing demographic shift in the city and the region. Second, the conversation about cultural identity in Thompson is one that Thompsonites and regular visitors to Thompson must first have amongst themselves before any external communication of the city’s cultural character can be successful.

What are some of the negatives/challenges about life in Thompson?

Negative Perception of Thompson (internal/external): Related closely to the discussion of culture in the City of Thompson, is the sense that a negative perception of the city exists both internally and externally. Focus Group participants reinforced survey findings in this regard. Interestingly, although Focus Group sessions were designed to give equal time to a discussion of benefits/positives (summarized above) and negatives/challenges, participants of all ages and from all groups were more inclined to focus on the negatives/challenges. Some participants, particularly youth, noted that negative stereotypes of Thompson are more likely to be perpetuated internally (e.g. by local media, by local people posting negative comments, photos or videos to the Internet, etc.) than by those outside the community. Participants, especially those who work to promote Thompson in the areas of business and economic development, felt that the many positive initiatives within the community are being overshadowed by this negative messaging and that not enough is being done to counteract negative messages.

Systemic Issues (housing, homelessness, substance abuse, crime, racism): The negative perception of Thompson, described above, often stems from the challenges the city faces in addressing systemic issues. Similar to some survey respondents, some Focus Group participants saw the role of the city as a hub or service centre within the region as a cause of systemic issues like housing shortages and crime. Many participants indicated that visitors and residents alike judge the city based on their perception of safety in the downtown area and that issues of crime, homelessness, substance abuse and public intoxication disproportionately influence people’s idea of Thompson.
“I like the Milliennium Trail and Spirit Way. They are very beautiful and right in my backyard, providing easy access to exercise and escaping the city/town.”
Some of these participants thought that stricter enforcement of City by-laws, the relocation of services and amenities (e.g. the Homeless Shelter and the Liquor Mart) from the downtown area and a redefinition of “homeless” (e.g. with regard to people who have housing options available in their home communities, etc.) was required.

Others felt that better partnerships and working relationships between governments (both Municipal and Provincial), community organizations and regional communities were key to overcoming systemic issues. In general, the tone of the Focus Group discussions around issues such as housing, homelessness, substance abuse, crime and racism indicate a strong need for both increased education about “root causes” and action to address these root causes. As some Focus Group participants indicated, greater understanding of and progress on these issues is most likely to be made through a partnership approach.

Lack of Inclusivity/Connection: Closely connected to the discussion of systemic issues, above, is the lack of inclusivity or connection that many regional residents, frequent visitors, and non-permanent residents of Thompson feel when they are visiting or transitioning to life in the city. Even permanent residents noted that they had limited connection to people outside of their own professional, family and friend groups.

Most participants from Aboriginal and community organizations who work with members of regional communities as they transition to life in Thompson indicated that a lack of programs to support this transition can create a sense of isolation, and in some cases, results in individuals returning to their home communities and losing out on educational or employment opportunities. Participants who had recently immigrated to Canada and Thompson emphasized the role of Settlement Services in helping them transition to northern life.

Poor Service Culture: Across all Focus Groups, Thompson’s poor service culture was regarded as one of the city’s most negative characteristics when it comes to attracting visitors and/or new residents. Each group provided a unique interpretation of the issue. Economic and business development organizations, as well as major employers, noted that slow and indifferent service has two main consequences: it deters potential residents from settling in Thompson, and it encourages high-income earners who are residents of the city to seek services outside of the community (e.g. in larger centres like Winnipeg or through online shopping), instead of spending their earnings in Thompson.

Aboriginal organizations pointed to the fact that recent customer surveys have shown that members of regional communities are major supporters of retail outlets in Thompson. However, participants felt that despite their purchasing power, the attitude toward Aboriginal consumers is often negative or discriminatory. Some participants felt that service-sector employees don’t provide a high level of service to their customers because they know that customers have very limited options and are likely to purchase a product or service regardless of the quality of customer care they receive. One indicator of why this poor service culture exists came from youth and Focus Group participants with teenaged children. Since service jobs are so readily available in Thompson, very little effort goes into training employees as they are likely to change jobs often in search of better wages or scheduling options.

Isolation/Lack of Access: While many participants identified Thompson’s remote location as a positive or benefit, many also saw it as a challenge. Among seniors, lack of access to more specialized medical care and affordable housing options were cited as major factors in the decision to leave the community after retirement. Youth viewed the community’s remoteness as a challenge to accessing a wider range of educational and employment opportunities. Youth also noted that, in the interest of keeping families closer together, their parents have considered leaving the community to follow them to university/employment options in other locations.

What is your vision for the City of Thompson in the next 10 years?

Inclusivity: The theme of inclusivity ran through many Focus Group sessions, and was highlighted as a key goal for Thompson in the next 10 years. Many participants acknowledged that Thompson is currently in a period of transition – from its ‘mining town’ past to its more economically and socially diverse future – and that in order to address the many challenges the city faces, all members of and visitors to the community must feel as though they are working towards shared goals. Some participants identified the need for structural change in both the public and private sectors to enable inclusivity. For example, encouraging more local organizations and businesses to implement the Thompson Aboriginal Accord is one way to foster this change.

Many participants also identified grassroots initiatives being carried out by community organizations and, in some cases industry, to develop new or strengthen existing partnerships to deliver education, health, employment and other opportunities that promote a sense of belonging within the city for all groups.

Community Pride: Participants who were very engaged in community life reported higher levels of community pride than those who were less involved. For many participants, increased community pride was linked to the idea of “cleaning up” or beautifying areas of the city, particularly the downtown. For others, it was connected to the discussion around inclusivity and feeling part of something bigger than oneself.

Some participants identified the biggest challenge to increasing community pride is the negative image that many residents of the city perpetuate both internally and externally (e.g. when talking to friends in Thompson, when travelling to another city on business, etc.). On the topic of community pride, youth pointed out a sense of frustration within the community, which they attributed to residents and visitors setting unrealistic expectations for Thompson (i.e. trying to be something it’s not).
“One of Thompson’s strengths is its diverse population, which I believe to be a true snap-shot of Canadian life.”

Sundance tree near Nelson House
Celebrate Uniqueness/Embrace Who We Are: The sentiment expressed by youth, above, is integral to a successful Place Branding Strategy. Through Focus Group discussions, many participants came to the conclusion that a vision for Thompson in the next 10 years must include increased self-awareness about the real challenges the city faces, as well as the strengths of its people. Many participants emphasized the need to represent a realistic, honest and hopeful message about Thompson to both internal and external audiences. Some participants thought that diversity and flexibility should be key features of the Place Branding Strategy in order to capture a fuller picture of the city, its residents and what it has to offer.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on a review of Place Branding Survey and Focus Group findings, the Advisory Committee identified a number of recommendations. Some are related specifically to the Place Branding Strategy, while others look forward to potential future projects the Advisory Committee may undertake.

4.1 Place Branding Strategy

Recommendations stemming from the findings of the Place Branding Survey include:

1. **Build on existing strengths to create “quick wins”:** Some of Thompson’s strengths, including its natural surroundings and its role as a service centre, were consistently identified and ranked highly by survey respondents. These existing strengths provide a clear starting point for messaging that will garner buy-in from a wide audience and create “quick wins.”

2. **Communicate how weaknesses are being addressed:** Weaknesses that were identified in the survey, such as a lack of housing options and the need for increased crime prevention and safety, reinforce the need to formally communicate and promote the steps that have been taken to address them. This includes the outcomes of the TEDWG process and other ongoing initiatives currently being undertaken by the City and community organizations.

3. **Recognize Thompson as a city in transition:** Sentiments expressed about the city’s growth and diversity support the need to balance the positioning of the brand from both the perspective of what the city is like today (current assets) and what it wants to become (future ambitions).

4. **Customize messaging to appeal to different groups:** Differences in survey responses between groups (e.g., frequent visitors and residents; Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents; youth and seniors, etc.) can serve as a starting point for customizing messages for these audience groups.

Recommendations based on the findings of the Focus Group sessions include:

1. **Target audiences who positively value Thompson’s attributes:** It is clear that characteristics such as Thompson’s location and climate can be viewed both positively and negatively. This supports the notion of targeted marketing to audiences who value the positive aspects, and the downplaying of focus on audiences likely to take the negative view of these characteristics.

2. **Reinforce the positive aspects of Thompson’s transition:** The Place Branding Strategy can create and reinforce positive messages about Thompson’s changing economic and demographic profile. Similarly, the messages developed must address the perceived lack of community pride and cohesion among different groups within the city.

3. **Prioritize messages with clear links to economic diversification and development goals:** Recreational opportunities were frequently mentioned by focus group participants as a major draw for visitors. These opportunities also have economic diversification/development and business attraction implications for the Place Branding Strategy.

4. **Balance existing conditions and future goals:** Similar to survey findings, Focus Group discussions indicated a need for messages that balance what the city is like today (current assets) and what it wants to become (future ambitions). This includes ideas like increased inclusivity and community pride.

4.2 Potential Future Initiatives

After considering all of the input collected through the Place Branding Survey and Focus Group sessions, the Advisory Committee identified initiatives that could build on or support the Place Branding Strategy and other Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group projects in the future. Recommendations include:

1. **Formalize the Local and Regional Identity Advisory Committee:** With the TEDWG process slated for completion in June 2013, Advisory Committee members identified a potential need for the Local and Regional Identity Advisory Committee to continue to meet in order to support and monitor the implementation of the Place Branding Strategy and determine future initiatives to pursue. Formalizing the Advisory Committee requires buy-in from existing and new partners in terms of ongoing time commitment and administration/coordination of the Committee. The Committee’s ability to forge partnerships among member organizations, and externally, will be critical to its ability to develop and implement future initiatives.

2. **Support existing, related initiatives:** The Advisory Committee could provide support to ongoing initiatives related to local and regional identity. This is particu-
“Outdoor activities are available year-round. There's biking and hiking on excellent local trails, fishing, curling, baseball, hockey, ATV-ing and snowmobiling.”
larly true of initiatives that may benefit from the data collected through the Place Branding Survey, Focus Group sessions, and other TEDWG initiatives. Additionally, the Advisory Committee could facilitate resource- and information-sharing, awareness and partnerships between various groups currently engaged in other projects.

3. **Prioritize potential future initiatives based on their ability to support economic diversification and development in Thompson and the region:** The Advisory Committee should consider any future initiatives within the context of the broader TEDWG process and in light of the economic diversification/development goals identified in areas such as education and training, housing, restorative justice and others. The ability to link any future initiatives (or existing initiatives, as noted above) to positive economic outcomes for Thompson and the region should guide the Advisory Committee's decision-making about which initiatives it may undertake or support.

5. **CONCLUSION**

The work of the Local and Regional Identity Advisory Committee to develop a Place Branding Strategy for the City of Thompson is an outcome of the Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group process. As such, the findings of the Place Branding Survey and Focus Group sessions, as summarized in this report, should be understood through the lens of economic diversification and development.

Many visitors and residents of Thompson who responded to the survey or participated in a Focus Group identified the city’s role as a regional service centre. For many respondents and participants, the health of the city’s economy is closely related to the health, education, employment, earning power and sense of belonging and pride of its people.

The Place Branding Strategy will ultimately be approved by City Council and will provide a framework for the City of Thompson to follow in communicating and promoting the benefits of the city to both internal and external audiences. As indicated in Section 4.1, the Place Branding Strategy must balance both the challenges and benefits of life in Thompson today (current assets) with what the city wants to become (future ambitions). In order to do this, the Strategy will focus primarily on promoting positive aspects of life in Thompson.

Importantly, many of the systemic challenges and issues identified through the Place Branding Survey and Focus Group sessions have been considered and are being addressed through other TEDWG Action Plans in the following areas:
- Restorative Justice
- Education and Training
- Housing
- Economic Development

In addition, the TEDWG stakeholders are committed to strengthening the governance and development of the City and region through an updated District Development Plan and Zoning By-Law, a Sustainable Asset Management Framework for the City of Thompson and the Thompson and Region Infrastructure Plan.

As these plans are implemented and progress is made towards addressing issues such as lack of housing options, public safety, and low levels of educational attainment, the Place Branding Strategy will be a critical tool for the City of Thompson as it communicates and builds on its successes.
A. ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE
TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 Thompson Place Branding Strategy
These terms of reference will provide a framework for the Thompson and Region Local and Regional Identity Advisory Committee with regard to mandate, structure, decision-making and roles, specifically in the development of the Thompson Place Branding Strategy. The main goals of the Thompson Place Branding initiative are three-fold:

- To engage and inform the community through focus groups, surveys, open houses and interviews. This ensures that ambassadorship and buy-in happen throughout the process.
- To develop a visual graphic identity and guideline. This will include logo candidates and a brand manual for use.
- To develop a realistic place branding strategy that includes actions in priority order, timelines, deliverables, budget and measures.

A word about place branding

Place branding differs from traditional product branding. Although it uses many of the same techniques, there are some differences that are worth noting:

First, the requirements of the brand are more demanding. Unlike a brand for most products or companies, place brands must serve many different stakeholders and audiences. A strong brand must be flexible and versatile enough to apply to community development, tourism, business development and to target specific sectors. It must accommodate the needs of multiple groups and communicate a number of ideas. It must do this without suffering the watering down that often results from trying to be all things to all people. This is a delicate balance to strike.

Second, the development and management of the brand is decentralized and informal in place branding. There is no corporate marketing department that is bestowed with the power to define and control all aspects of the brand. Rather, place branding requires a high degree of coordination and cooperation.

According to the Medinge Group (http://medinge.org):

"Place brand partnerships are not like central government departments, or local government or private companies or voluntary, community and charitable organizations. They are a hybrid form of organization. Their characteristics are determined by those who set them up, the purpose for which they were created and by those who form the team that leads the work of the partnership, the key stakeholders of the place. The form of partnership organization and operation is rarely a given. It has to be negotiated and agreed by those who are going to be involved. Brand partnership has to be worked at."

This Advisory Committee will work together with the consulting team to create a strong and unique identity. They will learn principles and practices of place branding, and will become the brand champions throughout and at the conclusion of this process.
2.0 Guiding Principles
The activities of the Advisory Committee will be based on the following principles:

*Fairness* – All stakeholder groups will be treated fairly;

*Openness* – All stakeholder groups will undertake their activities in an open and transparent manner;

*Mutual Respect* – All stakeholder groups will treat each other with respect;

*Cooperation* – All stakeholder groups will strive to develop plans that best meet the needs of all parties;

*Collaboration* – All stakeholder groups will work together in a collaborative manner towards the development of plans;

*Egalitarian* – All stakeholder groups will be afforded equal input into the process;

*Agreement Seeking* – All stakeholder groups will seek to develop plans using a consensus-based decision-making processes;

*Informed Participation* – All stakeholder groups will ensure the transfer of information to and from the communities they represent.

3.0 Advisory Committee Membership
The following stakeholders will be represented on the Advisory Committee:

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It is expected that representatives are able to contribute to the discussion of the Advisory Committee and provide input that will guide decisions about any necessary changes to the project work plan, budget or schedule; community engagement events; identity development; the Place Branding Strategy; and initial implementation.

Advisory Committee representatives will engage with and report to their constituents, staff or colleagues, and the public regarding the activities of the Advisory Committee.

From time to time as necessary, outside representatives may be invited to participate in Advisory Committee meetings to share information or provide specific input into the work of the Advisory Committee.

**Reporting Mechanism to and Function of the TEDWG Project Management Team**
The TEDWG Project Management Team (PMT) comprises three representatives from the City of Thompson and three representatives from Vale and is facilitated by rePlan. The PMT is responsible for oversight of all TEDWG Action Plans and Regulatory Framework projects. As such, the PMT will be the final decision-making authority for all administrative matters related to the development of a Place Branding Strategy, including changes to the project work plan, budget or schedule. The PMT will also provide input to the Advisory Committee and consulting team on community engagement events; identity development; the Place Branding Strategy; and both initial and long-term implementation of the Strategy.

As the facilitator of both groups, rePlan will be responsible for ensuring that communication between the PMT and the Advisory Committee is open, timely and ongoing.

**Reporting Mechanism to and Function of the Thompson and Area Round Table**
The Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group will transition its work to two organizations beyond October 2012: The Thompson and Area Round Table (TART) and Thompson Unlimited. The Thompson and Area Round Table is dedicated to strengthening the relationship among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal governments and peoples in and around the Thompson area. Arising from the previous Northern Manitoba Round Table, the TART recognizes that the basis for gaining a stronger relationship will be based upon a foundation of the shared values of honesty, respect, mutual sharing and contribution of all members. The TART’s focus for gaining a stronger relationship will be to enhance and foster economic development as well as address other areas of common concern in and around the Thompson area.

The Advisory Committee will provide regular updates on its activities to the TART.
## 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities of Members

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| **Advisory Committee members** | - Act as an ambassador/champion of the project by promoting and communicating the project goals and objectives to constituent groups, staff or colleagues, and the public  
- Provide input into decision-making and development of a Place Branding Strategy  
- Facilitate connections and relationships between the Consulting Team and constituent groups  
- Take an active role in the planning and execution of community engagement activities  
- Identify opportunities for partnerships that will support or strengthen implementation of the Place Branding Strategy  
- Support implementation of the Place Branding Strategy, as appropriate |
| **City of Thompson** | - Act as an ambassador/champion of the project by promoting and communicating the project goals and objectives to constituent groups, staff or colleagues, and the public  
- Provide input into decision-making and development of a Place Branding Strategy  
- Provide political and administrative oversight to the process  
- Facilitate connections and relationships between the Consulting Team and constituent groups  
- Take an active role in the planning and execution of community engagement activities  
- Identify opportunities for partnerships that will support or strengthen implementation of the Place Branding Strategy  
- Assist in securing adoption of the Place Branding Strategy by City Council  
- Mobilize existing or create new policies to support the implementation of the Place Branding Strategy  
- Provide ongoing oversight and management for implementation of the Place Branding Strategy  
- Undertake ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities relating to the Place Branding Strategy |
| **rePlan (Consulting Team – Community Engagement Focus)** | - Support the Advisory Committee in coordinating and facilitating community engagement events and activities  
- Facilitate the resolution of issues among stakeholders  
- Monitor, coordinate and prioritize activities to ensure adherence to work plan, budget and schedule (and overall project management)  
- Support the open, timely and ongoing communication between the Advisory Committee and TEDWG PMT |
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| **on3 (Consulting Team – Place Branding Focus)** | • Support and participate in community engagement events and activities  
• Responsible for collection and analysis of data, identity development, and Place Branding Strategy, as well as identification of priorities for implementation and support for immediate implementation  
• Responsible for planning, developing and delivering the Place Branding Strategy document  
• Provide technical expertise related to place branding in the development and implementation of the Place Branding Strategy |
| **Beke Communications (Consulting Team – Local Communications Advisor)** | • Facilitate connections and relationships between the Consulting Team and local stakeholders  
• Provide local perspective and critical feedback in the analysis of data, identity development, and Place Branding Strategy |
| **TEDWG Project Management Team (PMT)** | • Support an integrated and consistent approach across all TEDWG Action Plans and development of an overarching Economic Diversification Plan.  
• Oversee the Consulting Team’s responsibilities (outlined above).  
• Provide administrative oversight for the project work plan, budget and schedule  
• Maintain open, timely and ongoing communication with the Advisory Committee |
| **Thompson and Area Round Table (TART)** | • Provide political and strategic leadership in a discussion of regional economic development, including local and regional identity  
• Engage in an ongoing dialogue with the Advisory Committee  
• Oversee the coordination and implementation of Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group Action Plans and the Thompson and Region Infrastructure Plan |

### 5.0 Procedures

**Meeting Chair**

Meetings of the Advisory Committee will be chaired by RePlan in their role as facilitator of the project process. The Chair will:

- Attend and chair all meetings, or identify a replacement chair in advance of a meeting to be missed
- Ensure that meetings are conducted in a reasonable, calm and orderly manner and in accordance with agreed principles and procedures
- Keep the meetings on schedule and focused on agreed agenda items
• Ensure that all views and voices are heard and no one Advisory Committee member dominates
• Maintain objectivity with no bias shown to any one Advisory Committee member or point of view

**Agendas and Minutes**
The Advisory Committee will determine the agenda items to be discussed at its next meeting prior to the end of each meeting and rePlan will finalize and circulate agendas in a timely manner before each meeting. As facilitator, rePlan will prepare and finalize written records including a brief summary of discussion and the key outcomes of all Advisory Committee meetings, following a period of review and comment by all members.

**Meeting Attendance**
In order to ensure consistency in decision-making and to advance the work of the Advisory Committee according to the work plan and schedule developed for the project, members must make a strong commitment to regularly attend Advisory Committee meetings. Meetings will occur approximately once every four to six weeks between September 2012 and June 2013.

**Decision-Making**
In the spirit of the Guiding Principles defined for the Advisory Committee, high-level and procedural decisions of the group (e.g. adjustments to work plan, timeline, budget, etc.) will strive to be consensus-based. With the aim of completing the project on time and on budget, in the day-to-day work of the Consulting Team, the consultants will make decisions based on the pre-established principles and direction of the Advisory Committee.

**Regular Communication with Constituent Groups**
All Advisory Committee members are responsible for regularly communicating the work of the Committee with their respective constituent groups to ensure constituent groups are informed of ongoing activities and that their input is being reflected in Advisory Committee discussions.

**Reimbursable Expenses**
Advisory Committee members who live outside of Thompson will be reimbursed for the cost of travel to and from the meeting and accommodation while in Thompson. Travel and accommodation rates are set by the City of Thompson as per the Expense Summary included in Annex A to this Terms of Reference.

**6.0 Communications Strategy**
The Communications Strategy developed for the TEDWG will apply to the work of the Advisory Committee. In addition, an Electronic Communications Strategy will be developed to identify protocols for Internet communications. The draft Electronic Communications Strategy will be reviewed by Advisory Committee members and members will provide input into the development of a final Strategy. A final Strategy will be in place by early October 2011.

**7.0 Public Statements and the Media**
Advisory Committee members are responsible for distributing information about Committee activities to their organizations and communities in order to ensure that they are adequately informed and engaged in the process of developing a Place Branding Strategy.

With regard to media releases, members may be required to make public statements about their organization’s involvement in the Place Branding Strategy on behalf of their organization. In such cases,
members are encouraged to refer to the protocols outlined in the TEDWG Communications Strategy and notify the Advisory Committee of their statement prior to the public release.

In cases where the Advisory Committee decides to issue a joint public or media statement on Committee developments, representatives will work together to draft the statement, which will then be issued by the City of Thompson.

8.0 Community Engagement Program
The work plan for the Place Branding Strategy includes a comprehensive Community Engagement Program with four levels:

- Level 1 Engagement - Education and Outreach (to Organizations, Institutions, Agencies)
- Level 2 Engagement - Link to Existing Activities (community networks, organizations, meetings/conferences)
- Level 3 Engagement - High-Level Public Outreach (Open Houses, workshops, booth at the Mall, etc.)
- Level 4 Engagement - Group-Specific Public Outreach (Youth, Elders, Business Community, the Disengaged, etc.)

Due to the diversity of stakeholders in the City of Thompson and surrounding region, the Advisory Committee will take a clear and highly visual approach to the production and presentation of community engagement materials. rePlan and on3 will assist the Advisory Committee in maintaining open dialogue with all stakeholders, hosting meaningful events, and continued but focused outreach. As outlined in the roles and responsibilities of Advisory Committee members, above, members will provide important insight into effective methods of communication and consultation when involving other members of the public. See attached work plan and schedule for specific tasks in other phases of work.
B. PLACE BRANDING SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE
The Thompson Economic Diversification Working Group (TEDWG) was established in May 2011 to identify and pursue the most promising opportunities to help Thompson and the surrounding region diversify its economy and strengthen its position as an economic contributor in Northern Manitoba. One priority identified by TEDWG stakeholders is the need to define a clear Place Branding Strategy for the City of Thompson with input from both residents and visitors. A place's brand is more than just a logo. It is how that place is experienced by both residents and visitors alike. The results of this survey are confidential and will only be used as input into the development of a Place Branding Strategy for the City of Thompson.

If you are a resident of the City of Thompson, please answer the following questions based on your experience as a resident. If you visit the City of Thompson, please answer the following questions based on the time you have spent in Thompson as a visitor. If you have never visited Thompson, please answer the following questions based on your perception of the City.

The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete. Thank you for sharing your thoughts and ideas about Thompson!

**Introduction**

**Q1. I am a:** *(Choose ONE option from the list below).*

- [ ] Full-Time Resident of Thompson
- [ ] Part-Time Resident of Thompson (e.g. contractor, student, etc.)
- [ ] Former Resident of Thompson
- [ ] Regular Visitor to Thompson
- [ ] Tourist
- [ ] I have never been to Thompson

**How do you see Thompson?**

**Q2. Please rank Thompson on a scale of 1 to 5 in the following areas, where 1 = very weak, 3 = average and 5 = very strong. (Please rank ALL of the options below).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Very Weak</th>
<th>2 Weak</th>
<th>3 Average</th>
<th>4 Strong</th>
<th>5 Very Strong</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job market</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing options</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of doing business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment opportunities</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community pride</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime prevention and community safety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services and amenities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to childcare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and wellness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation and creativity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment options</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural surroundings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q3. **Of the areas you ranked above, where is Thompson the STRONGEST overall? (Please choose only ONE option).**

- Job market
- Housing options
- Ease of doing business
- Investment opportunities
- Community pride
- Education and training
- Crime prevention and community safety
- Services and amenities

- Access to childcare
- Health and wellness
- Arts and culture
- Innovation and creativity
- Recreation
- Entertainment options
- Natural surroundings

Q4. **Of the areas you ranked above, where is Thompson the WEAKEST overall? (Please choose only ONE option).**

- Job market
- Housing options
- Ease of doing business
- Investment opportunities
- Community pride
- Education and training
- Crime prevention and community safety
- Services and amenities

- Access to childcare
- Health and wellness
- Arts and culture
- Innovation and creativity
- Recreation
- Entertainment options
- Natural surroundings

Q5. **What do you like BEST about Thompson? (Please provide specific examples where possible).**

- [ ]

Q6. **What do you like LEAST about Thompson? (Please provide specific examples where possible).**

- [ ]

Q7. **Which THREE (3) words or phrases below best describe Thompson? (Please choose only THREE options from the list below).**

- Growing
- Authentic
- Friendly
- Innovative
- Northern
- Hi-tech
- Safe
- Diverse
- Rich history
- Charming
- Close-knit
- Culturally rich
- Progressive
- Accessible
- Service hub

- Natural beauty
- Business-friendly
- Welcoming
- Cosmopolitan
- Active people
- Unspoiled
- Sophisticated
- Creative
- Quiet
- Family-oriented
- Senior- and Elder-friendly
- Healthy citizens
- Tolerant
- Student-friendly
- Other (please specify): __________________________
Q8. In a few words or sentences, what makes Thompson BETTER and DIFFERENT from other places?

Q9. Please share any other thoughts that you have about Thompson:

About You:

Q10. How old are you? (Please select ONE option from the list below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under 15</th>
<th>45 to 54</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 to 24</td>
<td>55 to 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>65+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>No Answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q11. Please indicate your sex: (Please select ONE option from the list below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12. Please indicate your marital status: (Please select ONE option from the list below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legally married or common-law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated/Divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q13. Which Canadian Census category best describes you? (Please select ALL options that apply from the list below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White</th>
<th>Latin American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Nations</td>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Métis</td>
<td>Arab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inuit</td>
<td>West Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Aboriginal</td>
<td>Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Mixed visible minority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Other visible minority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>No Answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q14. Please indicate your employment status. (Please select ALL options that apply from the list below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employed Full-time</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed Part-time</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>Business owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not working and looking for work</td>
<td>No Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not working and not currently looking for work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q15. What is the highest level of education you have completed? *(Please select ONE option from the list below).*

- Less than high school
- High school diploma / GED / CEGEP
- College diploma / certificate
- Trades certification
- Undergraduate degree
- Graduate degree
- Doctoral degree
- No Answer

Q16. What is your total household income? *(Please select ONE option from the list below).*

- Less than $10,000
- $10,000 to $19,999
- $20,000 to $29,999
- $30,000 to $39,999
- $40,000 to $49,999
- $50,000 to $59,999
- $60,000 to $69,999
- $70,000 to $79,999
- $80,000 to $89,999
- $90,000 to $99,999
- $100,000 to $149,999
- $150,000 or more
- $100,000 or more
- No Answer

Living In or Visiting Thompson

Q17. If you are a full-time resident of Thompson, how long have you lived in Thompson? *(Please select ONE option from the list below).*

- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 4 years
- 5 to 10 years
- 10 to 20 years
- 20 to 30 years
- 30+ years
- All my life

Q18. If you are not a full-time resident of Thompson, why do you visit Thompson? *(Please select ALL options that apply from the list below).*

- Business Travel (short-term)
- Contract Work (longer-term)
- Shopping
- Visiting Friends or Relatives
- Health Care
- Education
- Other Government Services
- Recreation
- Entertainment
- Tourism
- I have never been to Thompson
- Other (please specify): ____________________

Q19. If you are a full-time resident of Thompson, do you see yourself living in Thompson 10 years from now? *(Please select ONE option from the list below).*

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

Q20. If you are a visitor to Thompson, do you plan to return to Thompson? *(Please select ONE option from the list below).*

- Yes (if "Yes," please describe why):
  __________________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________________

- No (if "No," please describe why not):
  __________________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________________

- Don't Know

Q21. Where were you born?

Q22. Where did you grow up?

Q23. What community would you call "home" today?
C. CITY OF THOMPSON DEMOGRAPHIC MAPPING (CENSUS 2006)
Average Household Income

- $38,000
- $78,000
- $118,000

No Residential Development
Median Household Income

- $26,000
- $72,500
- $119,000

No Residential Development
Average Number of Persons per Household

- 1.9
- 2.7
- 3.5

No Residential Development
Average Number of Persons per Bedroom

- 0.75
- 1.13
- 1.51

No Residential Development
Percentage of Population with Aboriginal Identity*

- 9.0%
- 47.0%
- 75.0%

No Residential Development

*20% sample
Percentage of Population that are Non-American and Non-European Immigrants

- 0.0%
- 14.0%
- 28.0%

No Residential Development
Percentage of Population with Métis Identity

- 3.0%
- 16.0%
- 29.0%

No Residential Development
Type of Housing Stock

- Single Family House
- Row House
- Apartment (> 5 storeys)
- Apartment (< 5 storeys)
- Moveable Dwelling

Total Dwellings

No Residential Development
**Average House Age***

- 25.0
- 36.5
- 48.0

*No Residential Development

*As of 2012
Percentage of Houses Constructed Prior to 1970

- 6%
- 53%
- 100%

No Residential Development
Percentage of Population with No High School Diploma Attained*

*25 to 64 years

- 5%
- 55%

No Residential Development
Population Change (2006-2011)

- 45%
- 9%
- (27%)

No Residential Development
Population Density (people/hectare)

- 2.0
- 32.0
- 62.0

No Residential Development
Households Spending 30% or More of Household Income on Payments/Rent

- 4%
- 35%
- 66%

No Residential Development