

Planning for Green Rural Tourism in Canada:

A Case Study of Pinawa, Manitoba

By

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Abstract

This research explores sustainable tourism strategies with the Canadian rural community of Pinawa, Manitoba. In this case study, 15 Pinawa community members of diverse backgrounds were interviewed about how their new reputation as a Manitoba tourist destination could provide community economic development to Pinawa. The themes that emerged from the interviews reveal the need for community-specific, focused consultation to be community economic development for regenerative tourism. The interviewees wanted tourists that cared deeply about community well-being and nature, which aligns with regenerative tourism approaches rather than adventure tourism approaches. The promotion of Pinawa as an adventure and beach town brought problematic party tourists, which interfered with community well-being and protecting the environment. The negative impact of adventure tourism required some controls, which Pinawa implemented. Pinawa has many human, social, physical, natural, and financial assets, which are important aspects of building sustainable livelihoods at the individual, community and regional levels to protect. Building on Pinawa's assets should be the priority to attract nature-loving tourists that move to Pinawa, considering place-based economics, and regenerative tourism approaches.

Pinawa previously developed a community investment and planning model to build and finance senior housing. This community investment model, called the Pinawa model, provides a community engagement and investment process that could be applied to tourism infrastructure investment. Tourist commercial facilities to be considered for community investment need to benefit not only tourists but also the community, such as a fitness centre, outdoor stage, and/or local cafe. Community planning for community economic development requires engaging diverse community members to consider community benefit and well-being in the medium- and long-term. With the town of Pinawa adjacent to the Whiteshell Provincial Park, the local community and Indigenous Peoples' role in land and water conservation needs review, considerate of Canada signing onto the Global Biodiversity Framework.

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Definitions of key terms

Attraction: "Any object, person, place, or concept that draws people either geographically or through remote electronic means so that they might have an experience. The experience can be recreational, spiritual, or otherwise" (Stange et al., n.d.).

Community development corporations (CDCs) are nonprofit entities focusing on local development needs. Most often serving low-income, distressed neighbourhoods and/or minority/immigrant populations, they provide political capital for underserved communities and people. Their origins can be traced back to the settlement houses of the 1800s, but the modern community development corporation emerged in the 1960s as part of the civil rights and antipoverty movements (Neu, 2014).

Community Economic Development: "is a community-driven process where communities identify and initiate their own solutions to economic, social and environmental issues to build healthy, economically viable communities. CED contains principles and goals based on a grassroots approach to development where communities choose deliberate actions to influence the local economy and improve the quality of life for its residents." (Manitoba Agriculture Food and Rural Development, 2018).

Cost-benefit analysis (CBA): a systematic estimation of the strengths and weaknesses of alternatives, with the idea of maximizing the benefits and minimizing the social costs (OECD, 2018).

Global Biodiversity Framework: Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 2022) under the United Nations (UN) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) aims to reverse the loss of ecosystem function through massive conservation efforts undertaken by every nation and community, while respecting Indigenous rights. The rights of Indigenous Peoples mentioned in this GBF target are defined in the United Nations

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (United Nations, 2008).

Canada signed onto this GBF and so is required to meet these GBF targets, including committed to protect at least 30% of Canada's land and water.

Green Infrastructure: is "strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features, designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services, while also enhancing biodiversity." Such services include, for example, water purification, improving air quality, providing recreational space, and supporting climate mitigation and adaptation. This network of green (land) and blue (water) spaces improves the quality of the environment, the condition and connectivity of natural areas, as well as improving citizens' health and quality of life. Developing green infrastructure can also support a green economy and create job opportunities." (European Commission, n.d.)

Overtourism: "The impact of tourism on a destination, or parts thereof, that excessively influences perceived quality of life of citizens and/or quality of visitors experiences in a negative way" (UNWTO, 2018).

Regional rural tourism: Activities to bring visitors in contact with nature in low population settings, with specific sociocultural factors (Lane, 1994).

Regenerative tourism: Regenerative tourism transcends the idea of sustainable tourism by employing the components of tourism (e.g., places, visitors and communities) as interventions to balance social-ecological systems (Bellato & Pollock, 2022).

Social capital: Livelihood assets where human connections and communications that bond people within networks, bridge people across networks or link people with government and non-government organizations to positively impact their productivity and

well-being (Putnam, 2001).

Bonding social capital: The connections of people of the same group associated with reciprocity, solidarity, strong ties, and reinforcing existing identities (ethnic enclaves, local entrepreneurs) (Putnam, 2001).

Sustainable development: Sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations, n.d.).

Sustainable tourism: An endeavor or activity that achieves a balance between the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development so as to guarantee long-term benefits to recipient communities (Stange, et al., n.d.).

Tourist Destination: "Any place at any scale defined by the market as a unique location capable of attracting visitors. A site is a location of a unique feature; many sites may be within a single destination" (Stange et al., n.d.).

Tourism: A social, economic, cultural, and environmental occurrence where people visit countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. Tourism has to do with visitors’ activities, including tourism expenditure (UN Tourism, n.d.).

Well-being: Well-being is defined and understood differently across communities and contexts. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) defines well-being as "a positive state experienced by individuals and societies. Similar to health, it is a resource for daily life and is determined by social, economic, and environmental conditions".

Chapter 1

1.0. Introduction

Sustainable tourism planning in rural communities should consider its sense of place, culture, community safety, and green space (Stange, n.d.). Community well-being is impacted by tourism, particularly over-tourism, where many people who visit are unaware or disrespect community protocols, safety, culture, and the environment (Bellato et al., 2022; 2023, Bellato, L., Frantzeskaki, & Nygaard, 2023; Hussain & Fusté-Forné, 2021). Tourism can undermine cultural and ecological integrity. Tourism, unless carefully planned, can be an extractive industry consuming its host, i.e., the local community, culture, and natural environment (Hussain & Haley, 2022). That said, there are ways to create economic development that upholds the well-being of the community, and it starts with listening/learning from the particularities of the community. My thesis objective is to identify, with people in Pinawa, Manitoba, rural tourism strategies that offer sustainable, or possibly regenerative, community economic development (CED).

The COVID-19 pandemic shifted tourism across provincial and national borders in Canada to local and regional tourism (Destination Canada, 2021; Jallant, 2020). Leisure travel destinations became closer-to-home, focused on outdoor activities, which had low COVID-19 risk. Regional rural tourism sprang up with people wanting to get outside. Pinawa, a small and unique rural community, had a large influx of tourists during and after the pandemic (Arsenault, 2020; Brock, 2020). Pinawa has many outdoor attractions. The float channel near Pinawa suddenly became popular, and tourist media featured it. The pandemic heightened Pinawa's channel float's visibility as an exciting, low-risk activity (Crabb, 2020). Travel Manitoba (2022) described that "floating the Pinawa Channel is a must-do summer activity". Regional news showed both people having fun at Pinawa but also the unwanted effects of tourism, including garbage and parking issues (Brock, 2020).

An influx of tourists visiting the channel caused problems. Tourists visited the nearby channel without necessarily visiting and spending money in Pinawa. The Pinawa administration hoped that planning a tourist strategy could develop a better path with economic development opportunities, which would have tourists spending money in Pinawa. Pinawa administration wanted tourism to bolster Pinawa's local businesses and municipal revenue. Also, some return on tourism investment was needed to repay the extra costs from tourism for newly built public washrooms, more garbage collection, and new parking spaces for the channel float. The town of Pinawa made these investments in response to the increase in visitors during the pandemic, which some residents perceived as using public funding to cater to tourists rather than residents.

Community well-being is impacted by tourism, particularly over-tourism (Bellato et al., 2022, 2023; Hussain & Fusté-Forné, 2021). Many tourists to Pinawa were unaware or disrespectful of Pinawa's community, safety, culture, and the environment, and their numbers overwhelmed Pinawa. Sustainable and regenerative tourism planning in rural communities requires considering community culture and needs (Bellato et al., 2023; Bellato et al, 2022; Hussain & Fusté-Forné, 2021). Many authors advocate for transcending the idea of sustainable tourism towards regenerative tourism, which considers employing the components of tourism (e.g., places, visitors and communities) as interventions to balance social-ecological systems (Bellato et al., 2023; Bellato et al, 2022; Hussain & Fusté-Forné, 2021).

Tourism planning can benefit from CED in Pinawa. The Local Government District (LGD) of Pinawa and the Pinawa Community Development Corporation (PCDC) see the need to plan tourism for both Pinawa residents and tourists. Pinawa wants to capture tourism's opportunity for CED and protect Pinawa's sense of community atmosphere and pristine environment. Many residents prioritize their access to natural ecosystems and the services the ecosystem provides for health and well-being. If the environment and community well-being are threatened, then Pinawa

is threatened. Development must be acceptable to community members, with their focus on the knowledge and nature economy. This development path aligns with the sustainable livelihood framework (SLC, 2025) and the principles of a place-based economy (OECD, 2025). These models consider the local sustainable livelihood assets (human, social, physical, and financial) and place-based domains of geography, resources, and workforce. As Pinawa's assets include both local bonding (i.e., within networks), bridging (i.e., between networks) and linking (i.e., across vertical gradients to government and non-government organizations) to access external resources, a CED strategy has lots to consider benefiting the residents of Pinawa.

My research approach is case study. This approach is pragmatic with a strong interpretative side (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I use qualitative methods to consult community members about Pinawa's values and ask their views on Pinawa's tourism strategy. The qualitative methods are semi-structured interviews with diverse community members and visits to comparable tourism locations. Supporting CED requires understanding what quality of life means for Pinawa locals and what the local values are. This research attempts to provide CED strategies that benefit locals, visitors, and the environment, resulting in more income and services for the community of Pinawa. My research focus considers strategies for developing sustainable tourism for Pinawa, without downgrading the environment and the quality of life of the residents.

1.1. Purpose and Objectives

1.1.1. Purpose

This research explores and identifies practical and acceptable sustainable and regenerative tourism¹

¹ **Sustainable tourism:** An endeavor or activity that achieves a balance between the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development so as to guarantee long-term benefits to recipient communities (Stange, et al., n.d.). **Regenerative tourism:** Regenerative tourism transcends the idea of sustainable tourism by employing the components of tourism (e.g., places, visitors and communities) as interventions to balance social-ecological systems (Bellato & Pollock, 2022).

strategies with Pinawa residents for community economic development.

1.1.2. Specific Objectives

1. Identify the interests of Pinawa residents regarding tourism and improvements in tourist infrastructure in Pinawa.
2. Explore tourism strategies that offer community economic development based on Pinawa's priorities.

1.2. About Pinawa

Pinawa is a small rural community located 110 km northeast of Winnipeg (Pinawa, 2019). Pinawa is located on Treaty 1 and 3 lands, which are the native home of the Anishinaabe and Red River Metis. Pinawa is a native Anishinaabe term meaning “calm waters,” as its waterway bypasses the rapids of the Winnipeg River (Pinawa, 2019). In 2021, Pinawa had a population of 1512, with over 40% being 65 or older (Statistics Canada, 2022). In recent years, Pinawa has marketed itself as an active retirement and senior-friendly community, attracting young healthy seniors (Collinson et al., n.d.).

Pinawa became a company town in 1906. Pinawa was home to the Winnipeg General Electric Company, which built a year-round hydroelectric power dam on the Winnipeg River, north of the current settlement (LGD Pinawa, 2012). The Old Pinawa dam stopped in 1951 because the Seven Sisters' hydroelectric projects required this water to be rerouted, with the second stage of the Seven Sisters' dam completed in 1952 (Welch & Payne, 2012). Old Pinawa was abandoned, and the Old Pinawa dam and the nearby houses were destroyed as the Seven Sisters generation station, operated by Manitoba Hydro, was expanded (Manitoba Historical Society, n.d.).

The flooding of the dam modified the natural shoreline at the new Pinawa. Considering

flood impacts, Manitoba Hydro restricted development of the riparian zones to 30% of the shore at Pinawa and other places along the Winnipeg River. These restrictions helped protect Pinawa's shoreline area as a riparian forest with a public trail system (Manitoba Hydro, n.d.). The planning of the new Pinawa was aimed at conserving Pinawa's natural beauty, with all the riverfront property undeveloped and designated as public access (Pinawa, 2019).

The Pinawa region was chosen by the Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) for nuclear research due to "an abundant supply of water and a large area of land not under cultivation" (Strassel, 2022). The "nuclear energy research and development centre," originally called the Whiteshell Nuclear Research Establishment (WNRE), before changing its name later to the Whiteshell Laboratories (Strassel, 2022). The AECL research at Pinawa began in 1965 (Strassel, 2022).

Present-day Pinawa was designed as a company town by AECL. Pinawa was established ten kilometres away from Old Pinawa in the 1960s to accommodate nuclear energy workers (Strassel, 2022). The AECL planned high-quality infrastructure and services. Pinawa has a gas station, shopping mall, Co-operative food store, bank, municipal building, marina, motor inn, schools and a hospital. The AECL built a staff hotel (now called the Wilderness Edge Retreat and Conference Centre) for the AECL single employees, as well as housing for their staff (Strassel, 2022). An agreement exists between Pinawa and the federal AECL, where the latter provides part of the annual budget of the community. Pinawa was designated a Local Government District (LGD) in July 1963 by the province, which became its administrator (Strassel, 2022).

The announcement that Whiteshell Laboratories was closing occurred in 1998. Activities to decommission began in 2003, when the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSM, 2020) approved a site decommissioning license. Redundant buildings were demolished, and constructed waste handling facilities (CNSM, n.d.). Working with the natural decay of radioactivity, the

decommissioning is expected to be completed by 2060, phasing out employment (CNSM, 2020). In 2025, the laboratories still provide some limited employment and economic activity to Pinawa (CNL, n.d.). Decommissioning nuclear laboratories reduced employment and economic opportunities, resulting in fewer people living, working, and spending time and money in town. Between 1971 and 1986, Pinawa had more than two thousand inhabitants (Goldsborough, 2022), which dropped to almost half following the closure but rebounded to 1512 inhabitants in 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2022).

The Pinawa region offers a pristine wilderness with many attractions (Evans, 2020). A channel float of calm waters provides a two- to three-hour safe, free-of-charge or low-cost fun activity in summer (Travel Manitoba, 2022), within an hour's drive from Winnipeg. A breathtaking waterfront at the Ironwood Trail extends over several kilometres, connected to the Whiteshell Provincial Park (Travel Manitoba, 2022). Whiteshell Provincial Park has a channel float and a picturesque suspension bridge (Travel Manitoba, 2022). Additionally, the marina, the abundant deer population, a small beach, and a curling/golf club contribute to the town's appeal. Nearby, the Old Pinawa Dam, with its elevations and cascades, provides an attractive landscape.

1.3. My background

I was born and raised in Argentina, where I lived until I was nearly forty years old. During my childhood and adolescence, I lived with my family in a 5,000-person community in the middle of an agricultural area. The town was ninety minutes away from the provincial capital city, and 30 minutes away from my grandfather's farm. Growing up in a rural community gave me all the formative experiences and language inflections. These aspects made me "a rural person" in the eyes of my classmates when I went to university in the bustling city of Buenos Aires. I received my degree in not-for-profit management, married and started a family, and immigrated to Canada in 2015. When we moved from Buenos Aires, Argentina, to Winnipeg, I was relieved to be back

again in open spaces and clear skylines, as that was where I grew up. However, I did feel the shock of a different language, weather, and culture.

I have always worked in economic development and continued to do so when moving to Canada. I first found employment with an Indigenous not-for-profit, where I worked for four years in a conference for International Indigenous Economic Development. This work was not only relevant and impactful for others' lives, but I worked with people who felt, acted, and talked in a way remarkably similar to the community where I grew up. When the program ended, and the pandemic started, I knew I wanted to keep working in the field of economic development – particularly in rural communities. After receiving a Certificate in Economic Development from the University of Waterloo, I started the Master of Natural Resources Management at the University of Manitoba's Natural Resource Institute because of its focus on sustainability. For my internship and research, Pinawa was a place with a unique history and population, but familiar small-town dynamics to those of my rural upbringing and rural economic development officer work.

1.4 Summary

This chapter introduces the issues of rural tourism, particularly for Pinawa. I then present my objectives, which are related to CED, regenerative tourism and a regional sustainable tourism strategy that considers the sense of place, culture, community safety, and green space of the community. Pinawa's unique history is profiled. I also discuss my background in rural development to explain my perspective.

Chapter 2

2.0. Literature review

This review explores literature related to rural tourism at the intersection of CED and sustainability. Sustainability is considered to be a balance between economic, social development and environmental preservation/conservation (Roseland, 2000). Regenerative tourism approaches are increasingly used to bring socio-ecological approaches, as planetary conditions require the earth's health to heal from environmental degradation (Bellato & Pollock, 2022).

CED is defined as community-led development for economic, social and environmental benefit: “CED is community-led strategic action that creates economic opportunities while enhancing social and environmental conditions” (Bernas & Reimer, 2011). The literature covered in this chapter includes sustainable tourism, restorative tourism, community planning for tourism, green spaces, CED, regional tourism, economic development, and conservation. This literature will help inform the discussion and conclusions chapters around the opportunities and issues of tourism planning for CED.

2.1. Sustainable tourism

Tourism strategies must consider sustainable development to create opportunities for sustainable growth (Slater et al., 2020). Sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations, n.d.). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are important to consider in the tourism industry are SDG 3, “Good Health and Well-Being,” SDG 8, “Decent Work and Economic Growth,” SDG 11, “Sustainable Cities and Communities,” and SDG 15, “Life on Land” (United Nations, n.d.; UN, 2025). This last SDG goal refers to sustainable management of natural resources, and halting land degradation and biodiversity loss (United

Nations, n.d.). Sustainable tourism incorporates respect for the community and nature, and requires that socio-economic benefits, including stable employment, income-earning opportunities, social services, and poverty alleviation, be fairly distributed to all stakeholders involved (Hussain & Haley, 2022).

Some tourism is not sustainable, operating like an extractive industry, and damaging or destroying the local community, culture, and natural environment (Hussain & Haley, 2022). For rural communities, tourism typically has a large ecological footprint, bringing relatively large numbers of people in, typically by car and often by plane. Tourists consume considerable amounts of energy and use a variety of motorized vehicles that burn fossil fuels. Also, cultural and ecological integrity for some rural communities/places can be undermined when overused by tourist industries and/or visitors (Hussain & Haley, 2022).

Some development strategies are detrimental to the environment (Zahedi, 2008). Tourism often needs infrastructure, which uses resources and can disrupt natural ecosystems. The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2018) warns of the risk of excessive tourism, negatively influencing the perception of the quality of life of the residents and the quality of the visitors' experiences. Negative impacts of excessive tourism are counter to some SDGs, including SDG 3, which is focused on health and well-being. Oppositely, sustainable tourism maintains essential ecosystem services, community wellbeing, and conserves biodiversity (Hussain & Haley, 2022).

Tourism may require new infrastructure to support visitors. Green infrastructure reduces pollution (US EPA, 2021) and emphasizes sustainable design (DeKay, 2014). The infrastructure for tourism in green environments/spaces can be analyzed by "The Four Integral Sustainable Design Perspectives" (DeKay, 2014). The four perspectives for sustainable design include sustainable experiences, behaviours, cultures, and systems. Tourism infrastructure for sustainability should provide direct knowledge of nature because people care about what they know (DeKay, 2014).

DeKay (2014) advocates that the personal knowledge of nature must be supported by designs that balance energy, information, and materials. These designs look for more than efficiency, fostering human connection, considering local, sustainable materials and net-zero buildings, with passive solar heating or other renewables (DeKay, 2014). Green infrastructure is cost-effective and easier to implement than traditional (or grey) infrastructure; for example, a parking area of gravel instead of concrete reduces runoff pollution by absorbing stormwater (Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], 2021).

Sustainable tourism can be helped through design and by offering visitors opportunities for learning about the natural settings they visit (DeKay, 2014). Tourism can facilitate education without disrupting the environment. Nature provides different ecosystem services (Costanza et al., 2014), which are important assets. Offering environmental information to visitors increases awareness about the ecosystem's importance beyond aesthetics and recreational purposes for both locals and visitors:

A better understanding of the role of ecosystem services emphasizes our natural assets as critical components of inclusive wealth, well-being, and sustainability. Sustaining and enhancing human well-being requires a balance of all our assets—individual people, society, the built economy, and ecosystems. (DeKay, 2014: 153).

A tourist destination is a phenomenon of the market (UN Tourism, n.d.). This market is influenced by distinct aspects:

The market ultimately decides the boundaries of a destination, influenced by marketing, as well as physical and cultural limits. Thus, the market may perceive an entire country as a destination (as marketed by a tourism ministry) or a single national park (UN Tourism, n.d.).

The OECD (2024) views sustainable tourism as an important driver of economic growth in the developed world. Key policy action areas to maximize the benefits of tourism for sustainable and inclusive development are listed by the OECD (2024). These tourist development policies include: i) improving management and sharing of the benefits of tourism development; ii)

offering inclusive, accessible tourism; iii) building the capacity of an inclusive workforce; iv) greening tourism with climate action; and v) harnessing artificial intelligence and digital tools.

2.1.1 Regenerative tourism

Regenerative tourism goes beyond sustainable tourism by seeing tourism activities as interventions that develop the assets or capacities of places, visitors and communities to operate to balance the interconnected social-ecological systems (Bellato & Pollock, 2022). Regenerative is the new word for our times to address the environmental crisis, rather than just sustain the status quo (Bellato & Pollock, 2022). Regenerative is defined as the capacity to restore nature intrinsically, with regenerative tourism being a new, evolving area of study (Bellato & Pollock, 2022).

Regenerative tourism requires innovative practices to embed tourism practices within ecological processes and local communities to elevate the human and more than human world (Bellato & Pollock, 2022). To realize regenerative tourism, the regenerative development paradigm is needed to innovate in numerous sectors, including built environment, planning and economics (Bellato & Pollock, 2022). For example, regenerative approaches are needed to deal with the problems created by mainstream approaches of economic development.

Bellato and Pollock (2022) apply living systems thinking and adaptive management to a ‘tourism living system’ to consider regenerative tourism. Regenerative tourism practices biomimicry to create a win-win situation that is symbiotic and can continuously renew itself (Bellato & Pollock, 2022). Core to the regenerative paradigm is living systems thinking for humans to align and co-evolve with ecosystems (Hussain & Haley, 2021). Regenerative tourism asks Pinawa to assess tourists’ impacts, community buy-in, ecological restoration, land reconciliation and economic resilience. In regenerative tourism, tourists, Pinawa’s stakeholders and the Pinawa region are interconnected in an ecosystem and actively participate in giving back

to Pinawa's land guardians, as their hosts and the Pinawa land and water (Bellato & Pollock, 2022).

2.2. Economics

Economics is the study of scarcity of resources (IEDC, n.d.). Resources include workers, land and raw materials. However, rarely economies are purely market-based or command-based. An economy is a complex system of consumers, businesses, and governments that produce, consume, and distribute goods and services. The economic literature frequently abstracts the market as an unconstructed entity beyond human control. However, Chernomas and Hudson (2016: 11) criticize this view of markets, stating that:

Markets are the result of very deliberate efforts by powerful actors to shape them to suit their interests....They are the result of the ability of different economic actors, with different economic interests and power, to create the specific rules that govern markets. Yet this real world of markets is frequently ignored by economists.

Chernomas and Hudson (2016) criticize the lack of economic education on the dominance of the most powerful people, corporations and institutions in this century. They view social roots and macrofoundations as a key focus to understand economics, rather than only the individual, inconsiderate of their class position, as the center of analysis. Different classes respond differently to economic policies and trends.

In 1954, Sir W. Arthur Lewis published the Dual Economy Model, where he described his theory of economics to make nations grow. This theory focuses on shifting the economy of workers from the low-productivity, non-capitalist sector (labor-intensive economy) to the high-productivity, capitalist sector (capital-intensive economy). Lewis, born in poverty, was concerned with how to help countries from the global south get onto a path of structural growth and development through industrialization. Lewis was aware that colonial legacies, knowledge and technology gaps, global institutions and trade systems shaped inequalities between countries.

Lewis was also aware that countries experiencing economic development transformation would experience greater inequality in the early stages. However, his focus was to make countries and systems more productive as a solution to poverty and development (Sen, 1999).

Capitalism, without a clear focus on social well-being, has been called “cutthroat” (Chernomas & Hudson, 2016). Chernomas and Hudson (2016: 48) warn that “cutthroat” capitalist framing ignores “the modern international institutions that create arguably the most significant impediments to the development of poorer nations”. Chernomas and Hudson (2016, 46) state: “People are not impoverished in much of the developing world because of their own misguided actions, but because of broad economic structures that systematically create impediments to their prosperity.”

2.2.1 Economic development

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) defines economic development as planning with industry, government and community stakeholders to improve community well-being through economic growth:

Economic development is the intentional practice of improving a community’s economic well-being and quality of life. It includes a broad-range of activities to attract, create, and retain jobs, and to foster a resilient, pro-growth tax base and an inclusive economy. The practice of economic development comprises a collaborative effort involving industry, government and myriad community stakeholders (IEDC, n.d.).

This definition is very broad. However, this economic development definition’s (IEDC, n.d.) focus on quality of life is rare (Levine & Tartandini, 2023).

The disparity in living conditions between poor former colonial states and the richer, developed countries had development economists considering the role of government (Chernomas & Hudson, 2016). Chernomas and Hudson (2016) describe the focus on development economics: “Development economics wrestled with two interrelated questions:

'What is the cause of the lower incomes in the developing world?' and 'What should be done to raise living standards up to those of rich countries?'

Definitions of economic development vary. Levine and Tartandini (2023) found no settled definition for economic development, nor agreement on a measure of economic development. Their literature review of 372 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 1950 and 2020 found the economic development literature had three macro-categories: “Antecedents of Economic Development”, “Tools of Economic Development”, and “Outcomes of Economic Development.” The theme “Outcomes of Economic Development” touches 339 of the articles reviewed. The authors highlight that gross domestic product (GDP) and income are the most mentioned themes (166 articles). Levine and Tartandini (2023) find it worrisome that quality of life is mentioned by very few articles (31 articles). This limited consideration of quality of life reveals a gap in economic development literature.

Development is considered freedom when it builds agency, according to Sen (1999). Sen (1999), in “Development as Freedom,” focuses on development, not for economic growth, but for growing individual capabilities that give the individual freedom. Freedom has several dimensions - political, social, and economic - in which social interaction and social protective networks play a role. The approach of Sen (1999) differs from CED mostly because CED is focused on the community, local and collective. The capability approach differs from utilitarianism or resourcism, focusing exclusively on subjective well-being means to the good life.

The capabilities approach created debates of policy paradigm concerning human development, which inspired the UN's Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI is a human development measure considering health, education, and income. Sen's model gives value to social interaction and networks, with similarities to concepts such as social, human and cultural

assets, and the importance of trust (Sen, 1999; Tungodden, 2001) as in the sustainable livelihoods and place-based economic models (DFID, 1999; OECD, n.d.).

Economic development approaches have gone through different stages. In his book, “Three Ages of Economic Development”, Dickinson (2015) describes how the first age of economic development started in the early twentieth century. Traditionally, economic development focused on bringing investment to communities to create employment and expand the tax base (Dickinson, 2015). Krawchenko (2016) describes this top-down economic development as exogenous. To attract companies to locate in their community or region, the government offered different benefits (Dickinson, 2015). This exogenous development has been described as smokestack chasing. Smokestack chasing was the means of development in North America during the post-war industrial boom of the 1950s and 1960s. Every community wanted to attract an industry (Dickinson, 2015). In the 1970s, this development strategy started to face challenges due to inflation, and big companies looking to move production to countries such as Mexico, Korea, and others with cheaper industrial labor and lower operating costs.

In the second stage of economic development, economic development officers shifted their efforts from attracting companies from outside the community to working more on retention and expansion of the companies already in the community. The shift was from “come here” to “stay here”. Dickinson (2015) also makes clear that many municipalities still struggle with this shift to the second and third stages.

The trend for the third age of economic development is the creation of employment through new companies that are smaller and more focused on the knowledge economy. This age is focused on young talent, young people, and local entrepreneurs. Endogenous movements, like the Antigonish movement of the 1930s in Atlantic Canada, created cooperative economic organizations that were community-led.

2.3 Community Economic Development

Community economic development (CED) is defined as “strengthening communities by creating economic opportunities that enhance social and environmental conditions” (CCEDNet, 2020) through community-led processes. Community economic development is a community-driven process in which communities identify their own solutions for economic, social and environmental issues (Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, 2018).

Manitoba and Canada have a long history of CED. In the 1960s, movements of social justice gave more power to the community through participatory processes to determine priorities and solutions. In Manitoba, CED has a strong practice to balance economic growth to counter and disrupt social disparity and poverty (Wray Enns, 2018). Wray Enns (2018) writes about how capitalism generates exclusion by distributing resources inequitably. Capitalism privileges efficiencies and market demands, thereby concentrating resources in bigger organizations and depriving smaller, isolated communities. Some victims of inequality and poverty are marginalized communities, including remote and Indigenous communities, far away from markets. The democratic and local approach of CED is an instrument to fight against inequality.

Silver and Loxley (2007) criticize development based on unbounded capitalist expansion and modernization as predominantly benefiting those with economic power. Their focus is on the key factors crucial for human well-being. Silver and Loxley (2007) consider that development is a form of colonialism, imposing control from the outside by economic means. Silver and Loxley (2007) give the example of Indigenous people’s lives on traplines considered to be “underdeveloped conditions,” targeted by colonial development policies. Trap lines provided a good life while stewarding the land, providing food, shelter and well-being, before colonialism. Silver and Loxley (2007) focus on CED’s ability to fight inequality not only by

redistributing resources, but also by using, expanding, and creating local capacity at the community level.

Neechi principles offer a holistic approach to building wealth and community with an emphasis on democratic, community-led processes. The Neechi principles originated with a Winnipeg-based Indigenous worker cooperative of the grocery store called Neechi Foods. Neechi's ten principles provide a guide for CED and are mutually reinforcing, as listed below:

- “1. Enable local employment.
2. Encourage local ownership and decision making.
3. Build local economic linkages.
4. Reinvest profits in communities.
5. Develop local knowledge and skills.
6. Ensure a positive environmental impact.
7. Focus on health and well-being.
8. Foster neighbourhood stability and community cohesion.
9. Value human dignity.
10. Encourage interdepartmental and intergovernmental collaboration (Neechi Worker-Owners in Bernas & Reimer, 2011: 6-7).

The Neechi principles are widely adopted in the CED sector in Manitoba and beyond. These CED principles help government departments support CED. For example, the Manitoba government's framework for CED applies Indigenous approaches through the Neechi principles (Bernas & Reimer, 2011). Fridell et al. (2018) found that the CED government funding and support are often difficult to access, needing substantial improvement in administration. However, the general supportive CED focus under the NDP became less supported under the Conservatives. Fridell et al (2018) comment that CED is seen as lacking broad public support, to explain its cut by governments that are not ideologically committed to CED. The lack of knowledge and understanding of the CED sector generally remains an issue.

Loxley and Silver (2007) discuss how the Neechi principles prioritize small-scale production to enhance social capital, human well-being, community safety, and local decision-making. Neechi principles encourage using local resources, including human, economic and

natural resources, to meet a community's local needs. The Neechi principles' focus on community leadership is in line with what Krawchenko (2016) describes as endogenous processes. This CED focuses on community capacities and assets. The OECD called CED a "new rural paradigm" (OECD, 2016). Krawchenko (2016) describes the CED in Atlantic Canada as neo-endogenous movements, aiming to change domination relationships. This CED focuses on local decision authority versus exogenous models that see development as dependent on non-local government and industry centers. Efforts could be professionalization or community networking, among other things, to try to better access external resources. However, Krawchenko (2016) points out that neo-endogenous models face pressure due to their lack of funding, requiring increased effort to be expended to achieve results.

Community economic development has many facets. In the CED name three different issues are profiled. Krawchenko (2016) mentions that some places put more emphasis on community, others on economic, and others on development. Different focuses result in different outcomes. Prioritizing community, regardless of economics or developmental areas, may result in tensions. When policies converge to consider all areas of CED, many benefits result (Odejemni, Thompson, & Wastesicoot, 2025). The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) considers programs and policies to transform community, economic and development assets to improve quality of life and well-being in a holistic way (DFID, 1999; Thompson et al., 2012).

2.4 Sustainable Livelihood Framework

The aim of the sustainable livelihood framework (SLF) is to focus on people's holistic well-being at the centre of development efforts, according to the Department for International Development (DFID, 1999). The SLF identifies different assets or capitals (e.g., personal, physical, human, financial, and social) upon which livelihoods are built and factors (e.g., policies, livelihood

strategies, trends, etc.) that influence these capitals (DFID, 1999). Sustainable livelihood assets are considered necessary to live well and are measured at different scales (e.g., the individual, household, and community levels) (Thompson et al., 2012). A sustainable livelihood is resilient and able to recover from shocks while building skills and resources, without eroding the natural resource base (Serrat, 2008).

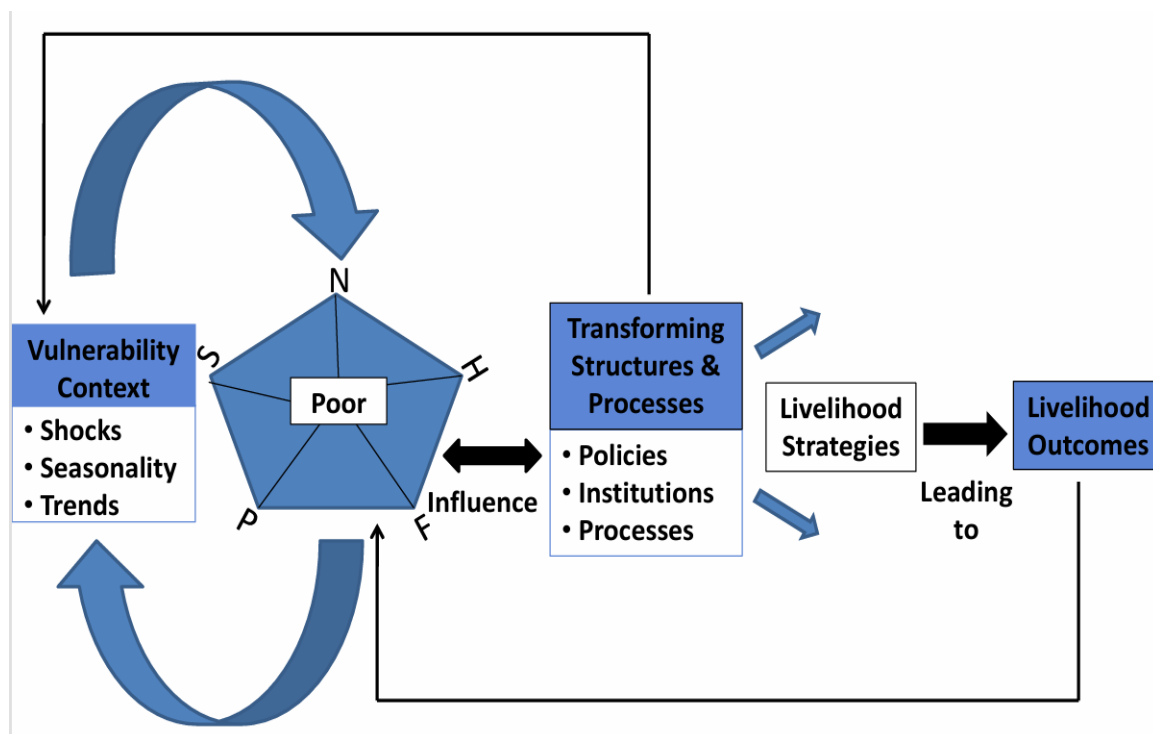


Figure 2.1: The sustainable livelihoods framework. Source (Thompson, 2012; Modified from DFID, 1999).

Canada’s version of the SLF builds on the UK’s DFID (1999) framework to identify six core sustainable assets (TMI, 2019; Sustainable Livelihoods Canada, 2021[SLC], 2021). The assets are physical, social, human, financial, personal, and health assets (SLC, 2021). In the Canadian version, the sustainable livelihood assets are key to addressing exclusion and poverty and to support both individual and community development, with a focus on the marginalized and Indigenous populations.

- Physical assets are essential assets for sustainable living, focused on infrastructure providing essential services. It includes safe housing, grocery stores and gardens, childcare nurseries, Wi-Fi and other communication networks, affordable transportation means, piping for safe and clean water, production equipment and other services that can maintain its capacities for the present and future while withstanding shock and stress (Kamal et al., 2015; SLC, 2021; TMI, 2019; Serrat, 2010).
- Social assets are collaborative relationships and social connections within the community and between the community and external partners (TMI, 2019; Thompson et al., 2012; SLC, 2025). Bonds are the close ties of family and friends, bridges are the connections beyond one's immediate network, and links across social hierarchies to gain economic power to the community (Putnam, 2001).
- Personal assets refer to an individual's sense of identity, values, and cultural beliefs that support growth and mental capacity to withstand shocks (TMI, 2019; Thompson et al., 2012; SLC, 2025).
- Human assets for sustainable livelihoods consider skills, employability, and adaptability, education (formal or informal), knowledge, acquired skills, employability skills, and leadership skills (TMI, 2019; Thompson et al., 2012; SLC, 2025).
- Health assets include health and wellness initiatives, resilience, coping mechanisms and access to affordable health care that facilitates physical and mental well-being (SLC, 2025).
- Financial assets include income, savings, financial services, banking services,

access to credit and credit ratings, and facilitate sustainable living (TMI, 2019; SLC, 2025).

The SLF focuses both on capacity and conditions that support people and communities (SLC, 2025). The SLF works on building capacity based on local existing assets, while being aware of external constraints, trends and resources (SLC, 2025). This SLF approach of developing local capacities is relevant for building capacity for CED. Similarly, place-based economics analyzes the needs and potential of a place, for CED, considering the workforce and other aspects of the place and region.

2.5 Place-based Economics provides a strategy for community economic development.

Place-based economics is CED that offers strategies based on the unique local assets of a place or region to achieve sustainable, equitable growth. Place-based economics applies a context-sensitive approach, acknowledging that effective CED must understand the ‘place’ and ‘community’ to build sustainable livelihoods. Place-based economics typically looks at the six PLACE domains: 1) Natural Environment, 2) Economic Attractiveness, 3) Cultural and Visitor Appeal, 4) Land Resilience and Housing, 5) Resident Well-being, and 6) Connectedness (Charles, 2021; OECD, 2025). Several PLACE dimensions match the core SLF assets, but with a holistic focus on the community or regional or provincial/state level, recognizing the interconnectedness of economic, social, and environmental factors. Place-based economics consider broader measures of well-being, beyond narrow economics, including social equity, community resilience, and environmental limits. The goal is to create equitable, sustainable CED in a specific location.

These PLACE domains provide principles and indicators to plan CED. Place-based economics has five principles (Charles, 2021). These five principles in the PLACE framework are: “promote community leaders, link divergent perspectives, amplify local capacities & assets,

convey compelling stories, and engage both/and thinking” (Charles, 2021: 6). This both/and thinking means win-win situations and inclusivity. The PLACE principles include engaging local leadership, capacity and assets, which is similar to the Neechi principles for CED. The PLACE framework aims to help regions attract talent, visitors, and investment for CED. The CED strategy of PLACE considers the issues of increasing global uncertainty, climate change, demographic transition, and digitalization (OECD, 2025). Further, the identification of attracting visitors explicitly considers tourism and regional appeal to visitors (OECD, 2025). Tourism has a high potential in job creation, export revenue, domestic added value, attracting talent and bringing investment opportunities (OECD, 2025; Haxton & Camacho, 2023).

Tourism provides economic opportunities and attracts new businesses and services that will improve the lives of the local population (OECD, 2025; Haxton & Camacho, 2023). To provide sustainable benefits, community development planning of tourism strategies must weigh the options and impacts (Haxton & Camacho, 2023). Tourism in the context of CED has benefits such as employment creation, stimuli for entrepreneurship, local well-being, and social cohesion (OECD, 2024). Tourism brings external money from visitors to the community, providing export revenue (OECD, 2025). Tourists bring resources to support the local economy by providing revenue for existing businesses and creating opportunities for new ones (OECD, 2025).

A tourist place-based CED example is the Shorefast charity in Fogo Island, NL (Charles, 2021). The tourism social enterprise is the result of a long process of CED around community sustainable livelihood assets – natural, physical, financial, social and human – and PLACE domains of traditions, culture, hospitality and community links. Shorefast is the charity created by a Fogo Island community member, Zita Cobb, to give back after retiring as a millionaire from corporate life. She brought her financial and human assets to support the natural, physical, and

social assets of Fogo Island, working with the local community and bringing external talent, ideas, and investment to identify alternatives based on local assets such as hospitality and landscape, creating a boutique hotel that triggered other entrepreneurial initiatives. This place-based economics successfully attracted the needed tourism and money to create jobs to retain and grow Fogo's population (Charles, 2021). Place-based economics have five principles (Charles, 2021) that could be applied in Pinawa as previously listed, namely: "promote community leaders, link divergent perspectives, amplify local capacities & assets, convey compelling stories, and engage both/and thinking" (Charles, 2021: 6).

Place-based economics applied to tourism focuses on showcasing local assets to create conditions for CED to bring funds for more services to rural areas (State of Rural Canada, 2021; OECD, 2025). Local products and services created for tourists also increase employment and service options for residents, including cultural activities, entertainment, food alternatives, and others (Lynn, 2020). Tourism provides the opportunity for communities to develop the infrastructure and services to enhance local life, creating higher revenue for local businesses and supporting the creation of new ones.

2.6 Tourism Planning

Tourism CED strategies need to be planned with the community. Lake (2014) recommends planning that engages the community. Diverse practitioners of CED suggest planning should involve and centre the community in the plan. Without community involvement or support, the best plan may fail (Lake, 2014). Different stakeholders need to be identified and engaged to have an inclusive, successful project (Ribot & Peluso, 2003).

Tourism is often not the first choice for building a prosperous rural economy (Foster & Main, 2020). Foster and Main (2020, 75) note that tourism is "the last resort for communities where the primary industry is believed to be dead and impossible to revive." However, rural

tourism faces fewer regulatory barriers than other industries, due to its lower environmental impact than heavy industry or resource extraction (Foster & Main, 2020). Foster and Main (2020) found that the required investment is smaller where the natural beauty is already there. This research in rural Atlantic Canada found that many had an optimistic view of the success of rural tourism as being achievable by simply promoting the community (Foster & Main, 2020). However, research showed planning is key to success. In their conclusion, Foster and Main (2020) mention the need to plan around what the community wants to effectively communicate and engage in place-marketing for tourism.

Hospitality is an essential aspect of rural tourism. In small communities, hospitality refers not only to hotels and restaurants but also to a welcoming community. A receptive community is important because rural tourism relies on the community's feel. Typically, community members volunteer to stage community events (Foster & Main, 2020). Tourism in small communities depends heavily on volunteers, who have limited time and energy (Foster & Main, 2020). Thus, diverse stakeholders need to be included and informed in a process of inclusive planning and feedback.

2.7 Rural and regional tourism

Tourism provides an opportunity for small communities to increase products and services (Lynn, 2020; State of Rural Canada, 2021). The attraction to visit rural areas typically focuses on green spaces (OECD, 2025). Rural tourism emphasizes the positive impact of green spaces on human well-being. A rural area is typically outside of the commuting zones of urban centers with lower densities. Approximately 18% (6.6 million) of the Canadian population resides in rural areas (Statistics Canada, 2021).

Rural tourism offers diverse natural landscapes to visit. Ruault (2018) points out that rural locations with green spaces and natural beauty near urban centers are preferred destinations for regional tourism. Rural tourism flourished in Manitoba during the COVID-19 pandemic

(Arsenault, 2020). Pinawa was attractive, being easily accessible on paved roads by car from Winnipeg, with great outdoor attractions such as the channel float and many open spaces. As a result, Pinawa experienced higher levels of tourism visits than in previous years (Gallant, 2020; Dearing, 2020). The pandemic did not change what regional tourism offered but created a more pressing need for local travel to open spaces (Destination Canada, 2021).

2.8 Green Spaces attract tourists.

Green spaces offer many benefits, which attract tourists (OECD, 2025). Connecting with nature in these green spaces increases physical and mental health (Markevysh et al., 2020). Green areas also impact well-being, with tourists wanting to take a break to relax. Markevysh et al. (2020) found that the benefits of exposure to nature or green space include lower heart disease rates, stroke, obesity, stress, and depression. Green spaces promote physical activity, which is protective against poor cardiovascular health, obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and infectious diseases. Markevysh et al. (2020) found that exposure to small green spaces, such as a pocket forest or treed street, is just as beneficial for health as visiting a natural setting or large public park. Regional rural tourism offers natural landscapes, natural beauty, community and experiences as its main product, which require conservation. Conservation is an important aspect of sustainable rural tourism (Turo, 2020).

2.9 The nature and conservation of Native land and biodiversity

Natural attractions are the primary focus of rural tourism in Canada and in Pinawa, which requires ecosystems to be protected and conserved (Sakschewski et al., 2025). However, nature is under threat from biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution. The large extent of the threat is terrifying, with seven of the earth's nine planetary boundaries transgressed (Sakschewski et al., 2025). The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 2022) under the United Nations (UN) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) aims to reverse the loss of ecosystem

function through massive conservation efforts undertaken by every nation and community, while respecting Indigenous rights. The rights of Indigenous Peoples mentioned in this GBF target are defined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (United Nations, 2008). Many land rights are defined in UNDRIP, including governance and access. Indigenous Peoples' active stewardship of land and water is recognized as key to protecting biodiversity-rich ecosystems and is highly effective (CBD, 2022; Thapa, Thompson & Hill, 2025). Although Indigenous Peoples represent 6% of the global population, their impact on biodiversity is much greater, protecting 80% or more of the global biodiversity (CBD, 2022).

The GBF aims to halt biodiversity loss and create harmony with nature. The GBF goal is: “to take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery” (CBD, 2022: p. 8). This massive conservation effort asks all communities, particularly rural communities with critical habitats to take urgent action to conserve the land and biodiversity (Thapa, Thompson & Hill, 2025; Wilson et al., 2024). Seven of the GBF's 23 targets specifically prioritize Indigenous Peoples' rights, including the first target: “to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities” (CBD, 2022: p. 9).

Canada has committed to the GBF verbatim. This commitment for Canada is to halt biodiversity loss, protecting 30% of land, waters, and seas by 2030, respecting Indigenous rights (ECCC, 2024). The GBF, which Canada signed onto, is a major shift to recognize the importance of Indigenous Peoples' rights, knowledge, and roles. To comply with the GBF, Canada has to double its current area-based conservation, while engaging Indigenous people. Canada has to reconcile its history of genocidal policies towards Indigenous Peoples, including land reconciliation, which is Canada's 43rd truth and reconciliation call to action (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada [TRCC], 2015a). Reconciliation requires that Indigenous

people have a role in land governance, and environmental conservation be prioritized (TRCC, 2015b). In Canada, Indigenous law, stewardship, knowledge and traditional land-use practices effectively conserved ecosystems' integrity and biodiversity for millennia but were thwarted in colonial times (ICE, 2018).

Canada is the ancestral land and traditional territory of Indigenous Peoples—First Nations, Inuit, and Métis (Wilson et al., 2024) —with many distinct cultures and languages. Colonial powers reorganized the land, relocating Indigenous people to reserves, typically on marginal lands, for European settlers to extract natural resources (ICE, 2018; Thompson et al, 2012; Thapa, Thompson & Hill, 2025; Wilson et al., 2024). The GBF transforms area-based conservation from undermining to recognizing Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, innovation, rights, and roles as the primary land stewards (CBD, 2022). Historically, parks and conservation excluded Indigenous Peoples, denying Indigenous rights to hunt, fish, and exercise other treaty rights (Thapa, Thompson & Hill, 2025; Wilson et al., 2024). Further, parks often forcibly displaced Indigenous communities through land grabs, leading to extensive human rights violations (Wilson et al., 2024). Indigenous Peoples' inclusion and leadership are needed as our lives depend on turning this biodiversity crisis around (Wilson et al.,2024).

2.10 Summary

Economic approaches have different focuses, with traditional economic approaches centred on the gross domestic product (GDP) or income growth, with development focused on building infrastructure, and CED centred on the community (Krawchenko, 2016). Traditional economics focuses on attracting industry to a region to produce employment and tax revenue. In contrast, CED focuses on lifting people from poverty and building better lives for individuals, while improving the community, by involving the community in the planning and decision-making. Arguably, both models depend on the existing community and place-based assets (e.g., social,

natural, human, physical, and financial), with one model using the resources as factors of attraction or resources, and the other model building community capacity for development. However, economic development risks social and natural assets for short-term profit.

Community, place-based assets contain the building blocks for CED (OECD, 2025). The SLF and place-based economics consider a mix of assets, including human, economic, physical, natural, and social assets. The place-based economic model considers tourism and the need to attract visitors, talent, and investment (OECD, 2025). The OECD also puts an emphasis on natural capital and sustainability as a growing factor of importance for visitors and investors.

Nature-based tourism can be a successful, sustainable CED strategy to restore and protect ecosystems and biodiversity. The literature in this chapter shows how natural beauty and green space in rural areas provide a destination with health benefits. Examples, such as Shorefast's CED projects in Fogo Island, offer examples of how tourism strategies can foster wellbeing. The need for halting and reversing the biodiversity, pollution and climate change crisis requires that humans learn and care for nature.

Land development, nature-based tourism and conservation efforts need to consider Indigenous territories, knowledge, and governance (ICE, 2018; CBD, 2022). Nature is a tourist attraction for rural communities, which is compromised by biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution (Sakschewski et al., 2025). Each community should consider their role in Canada's Nature strategy under the GBF.

Each community has a role to reverse the loss of ecosystem function and biodiversity (Thapa, Thompson & Hill, 2025; Wilson et al., 2024). With the GBF requirement to recognize Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, innovation, rights, and roles as the primary land stewards (CBD, 2022). Indigenous Peoples' effectiveness at biodiversity conservation offers hope to turn the

biodiversity loss around towards regeneration. The GBF requires that Indigenous people play a leadership role in land governance, which should lead to land back reconciliation.

Chapter 3

3.0. Research methods

This research uses a case study approach using qualitative methods. This was an intrinsic case study to explore a particular situation in isolation, to report back to the community. Tourism CED in the town of Pinawa was the singular case study, with community members living in Pinawa town being the boundaries for the case study. The context was to understand tourism CED in a rural Canadian community.

This research uses a case study approach using qualitative methods. Qualitative research aligns better with the goal of participatory CED planning. Listening to local voices is a pragmatic approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) for CED, as the local population needs to embrace and support the CED strategies for them to be successful (Lake, 2012). Qualitative methods are better for understanding attitudes towards community issues and the effects of economic development efforts. Interviews allow community members to answer the “how” and “why” of events (Rabinowitz, n.d.). The researcher, through interviews, connects directly to the community members to explore their interests, issues and any underlying aspects (Rabinowitz, n.d.). Community members are able to provide their specific circumstances, questions, and explanations in their own voice, which may differ from the researcher's hypotheses or from the theoretical framework or previous literature available on the problem or the community. Engagement introduces the human factor to better understand how people interact with their environments and others (Rabinowitz, n.d.). By engaging with community members, I felt a deeper connection and understanding.

Qualitative methods have limitations, especially when there is a small number of interviews. The interviews provide depth and diversity of views but are independent and not representative of stakeholder groups. Those voices interviewed are only a few people. These

voices may not represent the majority opinions or experiences. Their voices are the voices of community members, but not the community. Their views cannot be used as a projection of the community's views. Also, the research is limited to the internship period from 2020 to 2022 and does not reflect what happened afterward. The results of the case study cannot be generalized, and there is a component of subjectivity in my interpretations of the interviewees' opinions, which can probably be considered subjective. The qualitative method as a case study has a strong exploratory component, and the measurement of agreement with different positions should be explored in a different and quantitative stage if there is an objective of such measurement.

3.1 Data Collection

3.1.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews provided a general inductive methodology to help discover themes relevant to the objectives (Rogers et al., 2013). I conducted 15 semi-structured interviews with residents, business community members, community leaders, volunteers, members of the local government, regional partners, and tourists. Semi-structured interviews allowed interviewees to answer open questions with their innovative ideas and concerns. In a small community with highly active and informed members, a diversity of stakeholders was actively engaged in the tourist strategy. Semi-structured interviews provided a safe atmosphere for them to express their opinions, ideas, and concerns. The interview questions gave interviewees a guideline during the interviews (Rabionet, 2011) to share their ideas, expectations, and demands.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted according to the ethical protocol. This research operated according to the Research Ethics Board 2 approval under Protocol R2-2021:080 HS25063, with all interviewees being over 18 years of age and consenting to be interviewed after reading a consent form. These interviewees were contacted based on the contact information in the Pinawa Community Resource Guide for categories related to tourism, as stipulated in the ethics

approval. All safety restrictions for COVID-19 were followed. The interviews occurred in person, online through Zoom meetings, by phone, or by email. Interview data were used to identify interested parties' priorities. Of the interviews I conducted by Zoom, most of the interviewees agreed to be recorded confidentially, which required I not include their names and any identifying features in the write-up, in line with the ethics protocol. Recording the interviews allowed me to transcribe them. Others preferred I not record, in which case I took notes and gathered contextual information. Notes were not included in the quotes listed in the thesis but helped guide the strategy.

Invitations to participate in the research were extended to the community through the community channels of Pinawa's Community Development Corporation (CDC). I sent emails to all contacts listed in the Community Resource Guide, inviting them to participate. From the people who came forward expressing interest in participating, a selection was made based on representing a wide variety of people with balanced genders, from different activities, livelihoods, and both tourism and non-tourism business sectors. The interviewees included people who had tourism as a source of income and local government community organizers who had to regulate or support it. See Figure 3.1 to show gender and other aspects. Eight interviewees were female, and seven were male. One interviewee was born in Pinawa. Most interviewees had lived in Pinawa for many years. However, four interviewees were newcomers, including one who moved to Pinawa a few months ago and three who moved there a few years ago. The interviewees included entrepreneurs, professionals, government officials, volunteers, and managers. Eight were directly involved in tourism. Some people in the sectors were invited to participate without a response. For example, nobody from religious organizations in Pinawa responded. I am aware that religious organizations, youth, and stakeholders that we could call the working class did not participate in the research, even if the possibility was there. There are chances that other community members are not aware of, and their voices are also not included in the research because they decided not to participate.

I wanted to show the diversity of voices in the community as much as possible. I achieved diversity of voices and profiles of interviewees, representing sectors differentiated, such as older and newer residents, government stakeholders, tourism entrepreneurs, and others not related to either government or tourism. However, I am aware and want to clarify to the reader that even if the opportunity and invitation for different voices were open and public, not every sector of the community participated in the research. The results of the interviews were an interesting and ample variety of opinions, but as a qualitative case study, it was not exhaustive and was not able to represent every voice or stakeholder in the community, only those who wanted to participate.

Category	Sub-category Description	Number
Gender	Male	6
	Female	8
Duration of living in Pinawa	Few months	2
	A few years (1-2)	3
	Several years (3-5)	2
	Many years	7
Roles in Pinawa (multiple roles/person)	Entrepreneur	8
	Retired	1
	Volunteer	9
	Government	2
	Employee	4
	Leadership	6
	Professional	4

Table 3.1: Characteristics of Interviewees taking Pinawa's Tourist Strategy Survey

The interviewees were selected to have gender balance and cover different roles and durations of living in Pinawa. A detailed table of interviewees' characteristics was not possible, as this would disclose the identity of some in this small community. Confidentiality were provided to all participants of the research, understanding that opinions may resonate differently in small

communities. To maintain their confidentiality, no person was named when quoted and descriptions are broken down only by broad categories of gender, roles and duration.

3.1.2 Written document analysis

The research also included written documentation in addition to interviews. At the beginning of the research, I reached out to PCDC and asked for their communication and promotional materials for tourism, which were provided for the 2020-2022 period. The materials included PCDC and Pinawa's town communication materials, with some private advertising included. Other materials received and reviewed included reports provided by the PDCA, the Pinawa website and Travel Manitoba tourism materials, as well as the Statistics Canada (2022) community profile. This material was used for triangulation. This written data only enhanced and provided a background and explanation of the interview discussions and themes but was not used to generate the themes.

3.2 Thematic analysis

The goal of thematic analysis, according to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), is to identify themes important to participants. I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework in conducting thematic analysis. After I created a transcript for all the interviews and I became familiar with the data, I selected: 1) key quotes, 2) developed key words, 3) I generated initial codes, 4) I searched, reviewed and developed themes, 5) I conceptualized through interpretation of keywords, codes and themes, and, 6) I developed a conceptual model (Braun & Clarke, 2006) of themes. The conceptual mode is developed in detail in Chapter 5 and visualized in Figure 5.1. The interviews followed a guide that explored different topics, including: i) Perspectives, desires, and concerns about tourism in town, ii) Infrastructure needs, current or expected issues, and iii) Other relevant issues or needs that affect the quality of life and tourism experience in Pinawa. I

reviewed primary data collected in 2022-2023 during interviews about tourism and community development.

I undertook this thematic analysis of tourism materials. I then analyzed these documents to unpack and interpret underlying cultural meanings. Thematic analysis has been used previously for the analysis of tourism materials (Walters, 2016). My objective was to check how the community was presenting and promoting itself to non-residents. Additionally, I reviewed all articles, such as the Travel Manitoba magazine, regarding Pinawa during the pandemic time, limited to the years 2020 to 2022.

3.3. Visiting

Visits to other places for ideas for tourism enhanced my understanding of tourism strategies (Krehl & Weck, 2020). Different tourist sites were considered for their applicability to Pinawa (Krehl & Weck, 2020). Observing development approaches to the same problems, challenges, or opportunities in other communities and places is considered beneficial for planning tourism strategies (Krehl & Weck, 2020). I also considered territorial cohesion when visiting nearby tourist sites.

Territorial cohesion refers to a framework of regional development (OECD, 2025). This regional development supports lagging communities to catch up while sustaining the prosperity of more dynamic regions (OECD, 2025). Cohesion means place-based cooperation across a region. Cohesion requires multi-level governance and cooperation, connecting policies, balancing disparities, and promoting sustainable development. A high-level practice of cohesion can be seen in sharing examples of territorial efficiency, quality, and identity (Abrahams, 2014). I approached this regional research to identify efficiencies, quality, and identity to inform Pinawa's CED strategy with regional place-based options and best practices.

Visits were undertaken to see how other communities or tourist sites manage the same or similar landscape, needs, problems, challenges, and opportunities. Other touristic sites were used to inform options for Pinawa, after considering the interviewees' comments about relevant experiences in terms of infrastructure, services, and other valued characteristics. Visits focused on the products and services for tourism, hospitality, gastronomy, and public space regarding traffic, parking, and active transportation. Specifically, I undertook visits to Gimli, The Forks (Winnipeg), the Brokenhead Wetland Interpretative Trail, and Winnipeg Beach. At these locations, I considered relevant aspects of proximity, parking access, sidewalks, trails, public washroom availability, commercial space, waterfront and natural attractions. The selection of visiting sites was based on tourist destinations close by to Pinawa or Winnipeg, with a particular focus on waterfronts like that of Pinawa. I did take notes and pictures about the disposition and abundance of parking, picnic, and commercial space near their waterfront. This information was reported to Pinawa's Community Development Corporation and is summarized in this thesis.

3.4. Summary

This research explores sustainable tourism strategies, considering CED and place-based strategies with the Canadian rural community of Pinawa, Manitoba. In this case study, 15 community members were consulted about Pinawa's tourism strategy to benefit CED. I conducted 15 semi-structured interviews with residents, business community members, community leaders, volunteers, members of the local government, regional partners, and tourists. Further, I conducted comparisons with other towns for consideration of different best practices in Pinawa's tourism strategy.

Chapter 4

4.0. Findings

Different community members presented a variety of issues and viewpoints. These interviewees held multiple community roles and were involved in many tourist or CED activities. The interviewees were diverse community members, typically representing their own interests, rather than a community organization. The interviewees did not include key stakeholders involved in Pinawa tourism, such as provincial, regional and federal interests in Pinawa. Thus, I do not use the term stakeholders to identify these people.

A total of 15 community members were interviewed. These interviews were the source of generating the seven themes. The interview findings were grouped into seven different themes, with titles taken from interview quotes. These themes are: 1) Pinawa is more than a beach town; 2) Pinawa, the little town that could; 3) Tourist businesses have started, and they make money; 4) Control the tourism; 5) Attracting tourists that move to Pinawa; 6) Pinawa is missing tourist infrastructure, and 7) Promoting Pinawa as an adventure town is problematic.

Community members shared their different opinions on tourism as a community development strategy. The themes that resulted from the 15 interviews and public meetings are accompanied by different residents' quotes. There were additional themes and sub-themes emerging from the interviews, but they were not relevant to CED or the research objectives. Each person's interview was considered in developing the themes below, and all people who allowed transcription were quoted.

4.1 Pinawa is more than a beach town

Pinawa is attractive to tourists and residents for many reasons. Pinawa provides many outdoor attractions, engaging tourists and residents in an active lifestyle. The interviewee, J, highlights how Pinawa has the best combination of social, infrastructure and natural assets for

healthy living: “Neither Winnipeg nor anywhere in Manitoba has the combination of water, trails, landscape, community, and accessibility Pinawa has” (Interview transcript J). See Figure 4.1 showing Pinawa’s scenic beauty.

Pinawa has many leisure activities. Pinawa offers boating, water sports, cross-country skiing, hiking, curling and golf (Wintrup et al., 2017). Key tourist attractions in Pinawa include the Ironwood Trail, Waterfront, Pinawa Suspension Bridge, Pinawa Club, Pinawa Beach, and the Pinawa Channel Float (Pinawa, 2019). The golf and the curling club are key destinations for locals and tourists. Other regional attractions, such as the Pinawa Dam and Whiteshell Provincial Park, provide nearby scenic destinations within half an hour of Pinawa.



Figure 4.1: Pinawa Marina, Source: Uriel Jelin

The maps in the promotional material “Discover Pinawa” are attractive and adequately show different destinations in Pinawa. The town map of Pinawa in Figure 4.2 is the most comprehensive. This map shows 29 destinations, including an art gallery, a golf course, food trucks, a hospital, a fire hall, a school, a business development centre, a mall, a library, etc. This

Pinawa map shows tourists the many community services offered to make Pinawa a great home and tourist destination.

Some Pinawa material promotes itself as a tourist destination in winter as well as summer. Figure 4.3 shows that Pinawa has many activities, with ten listed for both summer and winter. Figure 4.4 lists the many Trans Canada trails through Pinawa Channel, but also from Pinawa to Old Pinawa dam and Seven Sisters Dam. Figure 4.4 also provides the winter cross-country trails, showing seven trails and their difficulty level for users. The trail distances are listed, but not the time required to travel. Clearly, a stay in Pinawa offers options in winter and summer for active transportation lovers and families with small kids, etc.



Figure 4.2: Pinawa town map of attractions. Modified: Pinawa Discover Guide.



Figure 4.3: Ten things to do in Pinawa, Modified from Pinawa Discover guide, n.d.

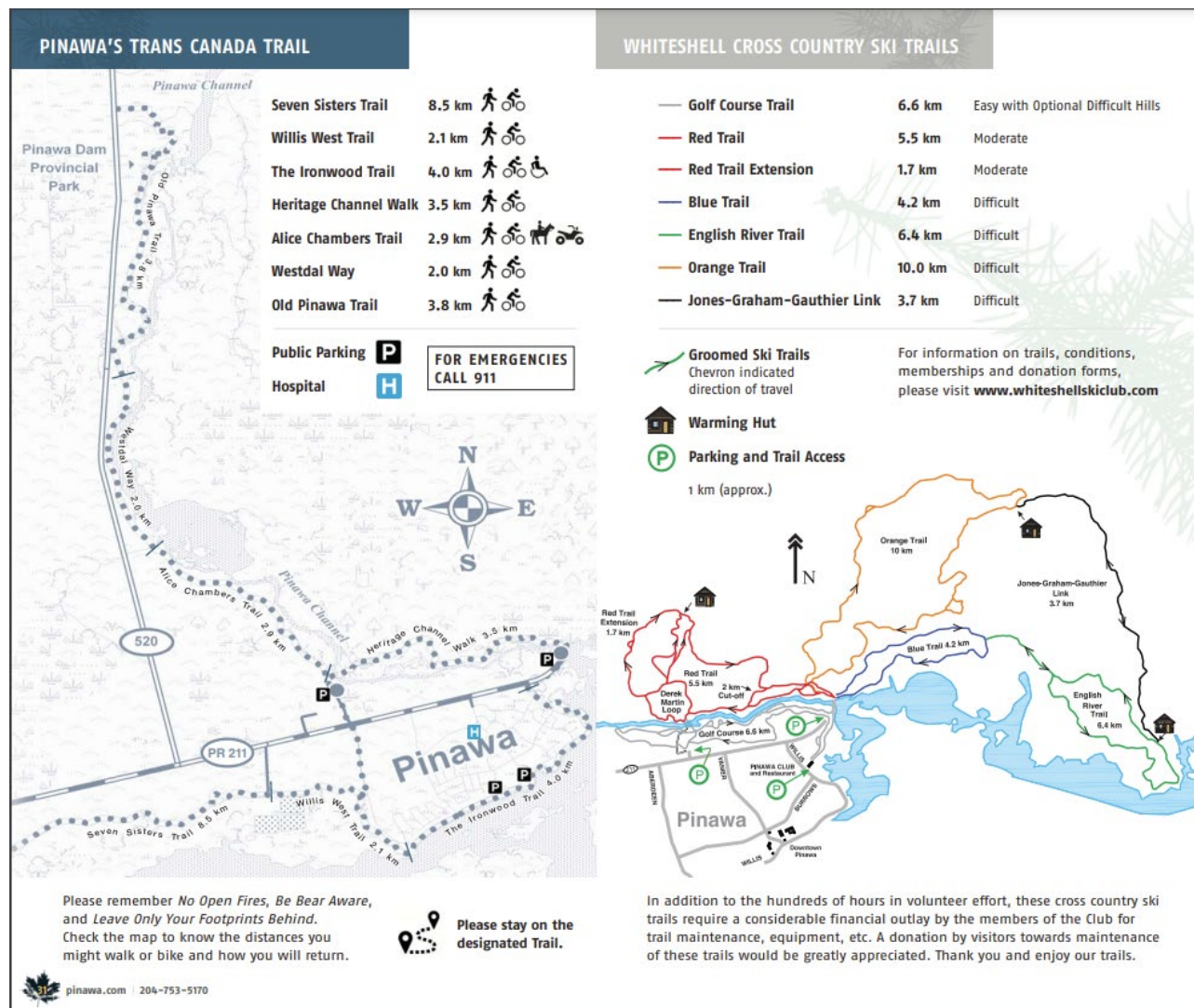


Figure 4.4: Pinawa Trans Canada and Cross-Country ski trails Modified from Pinawa Discover Guide, n.d.

When asked about Pinawa's strengths, Pinawa interviewees mention Pinawa's nature, people, and community infrastructure. Nature references are largely focused on the water and the natural waterfront. An interviewee describes the community as unique and very beautiful. The Interviewee, J, tells us how Pinawa is one of the most beautiful locations in Manitoba, but not a world-class destination.

I think the community [Pinawa] is very beautiful. It's not the most beautiful community I've ever seen in my life. Like I've been to the mountains. I've been to Australia. I've been to Thailand, like I've seen like some of the most beautiful location

on the planet. I think it's beautiful, but I wouldn't call it a world-class destination (Interview Transcript J).

Biodiversity is abundant in Pinawa. Tourists are likely to see turtles, deer, and foxes. Eco-education could share knowledge about wildlife protection programs and offer tours to view wildlife. For example, engaging tourists in the turtle egg protection program to protect rare turtles in Pinawa would foster a deeper connection between people and the natural world. As turtles nest near Pinawa Beach, environmental awareness and wildlife conservation education can be gleaned as tourists visit the beach. This is important because interviewees value nature, seeing Pinawa as a place to connect with nature. Some expressed their wishes for tourists who share their appreciation for nature and education.

Pinawa also features many cultural aspects, with an art gallery, trails, an educated public and public art. The Forest to River video (screen capture shown in Figure 4.5) showcases art and culture at Pinawa (Travel Manitoba, n.d.). The video shows women participating in a contemplative artistic activity by the peaceful water. This video shows a different, culturally rich Pinawa, which is more than a beach town.

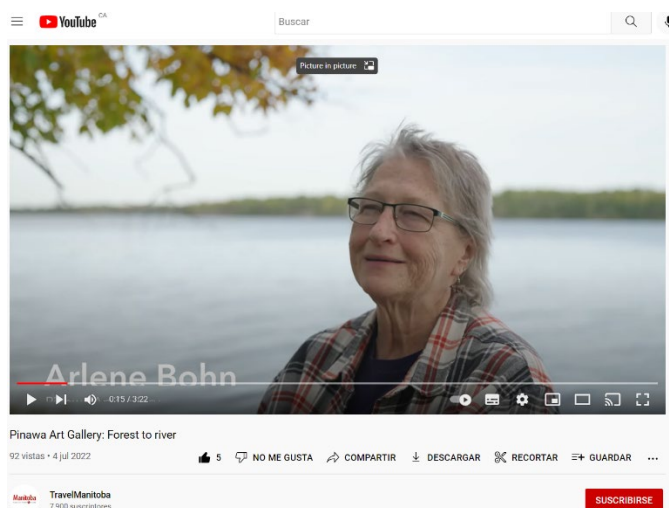


Figure 4.5: Forest to River YouTube video capture. Modified: Pinawa Art Gallery and Travel Manitoba

Winter and cultural activities in Pinawa are described as outstanding, highly valued by

locals and regional visitors (Travel Manitoba, 2022). This artistic achievement is unusual for the size of this community. Pinawa provides cultural shows all year round, particularly in winter. The interviews indicated Pinawa's culture is a source of pride and differentiation. For example, the Interviewee, M, highlights Pinawa's deep culture and uniqueness: "We are very unique, and we are like one of the most like culturally deep towns, I think in all Manitoba" (Interview transcript M).

Pinawa is in Sakgeeng's traditional territory. One interviewee made one reference about acknowledging the Indigenous history of the region. The interviewee N stated:

I think one of the things that I would like to see in Pinawa that I have seen in other places is public art (that) ties together the history of Pinawa, as well as the environment, the region. Indigenous people and (the) culture of this area. And the flora and fauna. (Interview Transcript N).

This region includes the nearby petroforms, about 40 km by road, in the Whiteshell region, named the Bannock Point Petroforms. However, the original name of these petroforms in Anishinaabemowin (the Ojibwe language) is Manitouabee, translated as "Where the Spirit Sits." (Maytwayashing, 2025). The rocks in the Whiteshell Park nearby are considered sacred by the Anishinaabe (Maytwayashing, 2025).

Another opportunity for Indigenous knowledge and collaboration with First Nations was mentioned. An Interviewee mentioned that Pinawa could learn from Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, which developed a beautiful boardwalk, the Debwednon Trail. This trail has quotes from Elders on educational boards providing nature and cultural knowledge in Anishinaabemowin and English. The trail is designed to integrate with and connect visitors to nature, with a raised boardwalk that protects the environment while giving access for tourists and community members to view.

Pinawa considers itself more than a beach town. Interviewees felt that a beach town is a bleak landscape when visitors are gone, and businesses are closed. Local businesses, depending only on summer visitors, are something already feared and rejected by some. Interviewee S rejects

the beach town “party” tourist, wanting nature lovers and future residents to be the tourists. Beach town tourists is how community members refer to party tourists who are day-trippers. Residents also see tourism linked to one season, with stores that are closed during the rest of the year, negatively impacting year-round residents. The Interviewee, S, asks that Pinawa define its point for tourism, stating:

What I'm a little concerned about is there isn't a vision for what we want tourism to do for Pinawa. I think the idea of encouraging a lot of seasonal businesses is nice. It works but it's not a long-term strategy for Pinawa. I look at places like Winnipeg Beach that a lot of times a year that little community looks pretty sad because they're so focused on seasonal activities.

So, I would argue that the point of tourism for Pinawa, a long-term plan for tourism for Pinawa should be to get people to come to Pinawa to see the community and perhaps decide to move here what we need are more residents. The residents will bring businesses if they need to. But I don't think tourism for tourism's sake is the objective that PCDC [Pinawa Community Development Corporation] should be headed for. They shouldn't be thinking about the idea that we want people coming to Pinawa, (they) will buy homes, will bring a business with them. So, these are probably not the drinking float people but slightly older sectors of the tourism market if you like (Interview transcript S).

4.2 Pinawa: The Little Town that Could

Pinawa's strong sense of community achievement is summarized under the phrase "the little town that could". People and community references indicate an engaged, highly educated community with high levels of dedicated volunteers. Cultural, human and social capitals are high. Pinawa has achieved major goals, such as bringing an entrepreneurial centre, the “Pinawa Model” senior home (Rummery & Iverson, 2015) and commandeering the highway² at the Channel float park, which was supposedly only possible for larger communities.

Pinawa has a development corporation (PCDC) to accomplish its goals with a clear mission and goals as shown in Figure 4.6. This vision of Pinawa becoming a growing, prosperous, vibrant,

² The local government district (LGD) of Pinawa obtained authorization to develop the land at the end of Highway 211 for parking spaces managed by the local government (LGD Pinawa, Quarterly Newsletter, April-June 2021).

and sustainable community is in line with the tourism strategy, particularly using tourism as a recruitment strategy for permanent residents.

“Pinawa CDC is a non-profit corporation devoted to enhancing community economic development in Pinawa.

OUR VISION: For Pinawa to become a growing, prosperous, vibrant, and sustainable community.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT: To promote the Pinawa and lead the growth of business, community development, and enhancement of quality of life. We work through cooperative efforts with other groups.

OUR GOALS: The Pinawa CDC is working to achieve four major goals:

- 1) To have a comprehensive marketing plan to support the mission of Pinawa CDC.
- 2) For Pinawa CDC to have a high profile in the community.
- 3) To realize the achievement of a minimum of one major economic development project over the next five years.
- 4) To be a sustainable and continuously improving organization.”

Figure 4.6: Pinawa Community Development Corporation mission and goals (Pinawa, n.d.).

Community economic development requires meeting community needs with community solutions for local programs and services. Community solutions require people to be willing to adapt to new ideas (OECD, 2025). An Interviewee, M, explained that the scientific background of people at Pinawa makes them open to ideas more than many communities:

That scientific background really just means that we are open to a lot more ideas than most towns. I know there's people in Pinawa that don't like change. But I've lived in many more towns that are much more like...against anybody that wants to change anything. There's no imagination(...) for what they could be other than a primary resource extraction (Interview transcript M).

The Pinawa Model illustrates that this community can mobilize to solve its problems with local businesses. Pinawa was able to mobilize housing, businesses, investment, and CED for its senior's home. An Interviewee, R, commented about how Pinawa is open to change and able to make it:

Pinawa has already demonstrated by their ability to shift to accommodate retired folks. By their, like you know, ability to put up so much different types of recreation infrastructure already demonstrated that they can shift. And they can like, do things that are not typical of the region. So, I think that even though there is like, some opposition, I think there's way more [people] that there's so many people that are willing to look at change and look at new

ideas (Interview transcript K).

The Pinawa residents describe their community members as being entrepreneurial. Business ideas came from interviewees experienced in tourist and non-tourist businesses, and others without business experience. The Pinawa residents have confidence in their capacities. There is history and culture involved in the "company town" folklore, with a quasi-mythical memory of underground businesses when the company regulated commercial activity in town.

The Interviewee, J, describes the sideline businesses in Pinawa:

One time there were 60 businesses that were in basements of homes. And that was part of the corporate legacy. You were allowed to put a sign out front of your home saying I sell clothing here. You just had the note to get the back go to that person's house. Nice clothing for sale. So that was a traditional thing here. I don't think it matters. It's not our business whether people can get their money from an inheritance or from a small sideline business or from a major intellectual property business. If they're going to come to live here, they'll figure out their finances (Interview transcript J).

The "Pinawa Model" offers a CED model that meets seniors' housing needs and can be applied to tourism. Rummery and Iverson (2015) coined the term "Pinawa Model. The "Pinawa Model" is described as "a well-designed and commodious suite residence in Pinawa, privately funded through a for-profit corporation, Pinawa Ironwood Investment Limited" (Rummery & Iverson, 2015). The Ironwood residence opened in 2010 to be locally owned and managed as:

The result of the hard work and vision of some determined people [and] is a fine facility, locally owned and managed, that is providing safe and spacious accommodation (Rummery & Iverson, 2015).

The Ironwood residence has twenty-four independent-living one- and two-bedroom apartments, each with a den and patio. The financing was done with a community investment fund and residents' deposits:

The funding of the Ironwood rests on three legs. The first was an investment of \$1,000,000 by shareholders, who were mostly from the community. The second was a mortgage from a credit union, and the third was a deposit of \$40,000 made by the tenant of each suite. This deposit draws interest at a competitive rate (currently 3%), which is paid monthly and is enough to cover parking. The \$40,000 principal is returned to tenants when they leave (Rummery & Iverson, 2015).

Further, the Ironwood owns and operates twelve suites (private bedroom and living area) of supportive housing that provides shared meals in a shared dining room (Pinawa Ironwood, n.d.). The regional health authority (Pinawa Ironwood, n.d.) provides admissions, meals, and care. The supportive housing capital funds were partially provided by a forgivable loan from the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation to ensure affordable rents.

Pinawa advertises Pinawa Ironwood as surrounded by beautiful nature. Their website states:

Pinawa Ironwood is a beautiful complex in the calm and peaceful community of Pinawa, Manitoba, located only an hour northeast of Winnipeg. Surrounded by boreal forest, sparkling lakes, and vast parkland, Pinawa is full of wildlife and greenery for all to enjoy (Pinawa Ironwood, n.d.).

A local initiative, being able to build and operate a housing alternative for seniors, is a success story for providing housing for seniors to age in place (Rummery & Iverson, 2015). A survey details that 81% of Manitobans desire to age in place, but 77% worry that there is not enough housing available, and 85% mentioned challenges to find a suitable home (JohnQ Public Impact, 2025).

The Pinawa model is interesting and attractive for Pinawa's tourism strategy. The Pinawa model involved community investment. The community organized around an objective and found creative, collaborative and local ways to solve the identified problem. The community was able to use its local networks with entrepreneurial knowledge and experience to facilitate local investment, while also linking to external resources.

4.3 Tourist companies have started, and they make money

Many of the community residents who were interviewed see tourism's enormous potential for economic development and diversification of Pinawa. Most people in Pinawa's tourism committee had businesses in tourism and saw tourism as their livelihood. Tourism in Pinawa is more than accommodation in motels, hotels, and restaurants. As well as providing kayaks and tubes

for rent, companies provide shuttles between the start and end of the channel float. An interviewee, M, discussed that people are supplying a “shuttle to float channel. So, companies have started, and they make money.” Other businesses offer guided tours.

Pinawa has tourism numbers during the summer. This period of two or three months has lots of traffic. The tourism numbers are high enough to sustain summer tourism businesses, to keep the dollars in the community, according to the Interviewee, R:

We look at our downtown development plan and we know for sure that we can sustain summer tourism and the retail industry. There's a huge opportunity there. There's enough traffic to this community in those [tourist] months that would support those kinds of businesses operating (Interview transcript R).

Pinawa is engaging with environmental organizations on nature tourists. For example, Pinawa is a location with Nature Manitoba, TransCanada Trails, and CPAWS activities.

Many community members believe tourism products and services support and employ local people and businesses, benefiting the community. The focus of Pinawa was on local Manitoba people becoming tourists and buying products and services, according to Interviewee J:

We're also not trying to attract tourists from Hong Kong or from you know, from Europe to come ... but Manitoba. Because localized tourism has become very important, especially during [the] pandemic (Interview transcript J).

There are two sides to tourism. Most of the interviewed Pinawa newcomers, people who moved recently into the community, were in favour of tourism, recognizing the value and potential of certain kinds of tourism. Five interviews with newcomers also felt that the number of tourists partying in channel float tubes was disruptive. These newcomers shared the views of many older residents about this kind of tourism negatively affecting the dynamics, atmosphere, and landscape that made them want to move to Pinawa. Their opinion is in line with the objectives of Pinawa's Community Development Corporation, which is that economic development, including tourism, should attract new residents. These new residents share the worries of longer-term residents about

the type of day-trip channel-float tourists and their impact on the atmosphere of the community.

4.4 Control tourism

All interviewees wanted tourism controlled for CED, sustainability, and minimal disruption. Sustainable tourism planning in rural communities should consider its sense of place, culture, community safety, and green space (Gocer et al., 2024; Litman, 2018). Community well-being is impacted by tourism, particularly over-tourism, where many people visit inconsiderate of community protocols, safety, culture, and the environment (Hussain & Harley, 2022).

All interviewees respected nature and wanted tourists to do the same. All the interviewees regarded nature as Pinawa's biggest attraction, needing protection. The interviewees of Pinawa prioritized preserving the natural environment. Interviewees were upset by littering and the destruction of nature by tourists and wanted a different tourist that loved nature and took positive rather than negative actions toward the environment. For example, an interviewee mentioned the turtle egg protection program as a way to involve nature-loving tourists. This engagement with caring for the environment, including participating in nature protection, is in line with regenerative tourism (Bellato & Pollock, 2022)

Some community members speak against tourism as a development path. The influx of tourists overran Pinawa, creating tensions with local Pinawa residents, according to interviews. Parking, widespread littering, drunken behaviours, and other issues resulted from tourism, which caused safety and other negative impacts on the community. The long-term residents interviewed recognized tourism's disruption of Pinawa's dynamics and their quality of life.

Many interviewees see Pinawa as perfect the way it is. This community is still populated by families of elite scientists, who were or still are employed by the Atomic Energy Lab. This community was built on science and considered unique, according to the Interviewee, B:

Pinawa is their paradise and they don't want their vision of paradise to be changed. So that's

okay as long as they don't get in the way of other people's vision of Pinawa, in my estimation. But it's the people that have lived here for a long time [versus] others moved here for any variety of reasons (Interview transcript B).

Thus, tourism is a negative change outside their control. An Interviewee, I, said:

There is a small section I think of people that are against tourism. But they're against change in general (Interview transcript I).

Another Interviewee, E, discussed how the close-knit-community was being tested by disruptive tourists:

We're like one big family. But now we've got all these people [tourists] extra coming and it makes it harder. But many of us know that that's what we just have to control the tourism (Interview transcript E).

The traffic and parking issues affected the residents, changing the atmosphere of the community, as noted in the quotes below by community members. Parking was a trigger issue for people. The traffic and parking issues affected the residents' ability to enjoy their community. As an interviewee stated, "we don't want you [tourists] parking on our waterfront." Pinawa tackled the parking – first in ineffective ways with signage, which Interviewee G complained about.

Along the waterfront... people (park) under the no parking (signs).... I think there are adequate signs. The problem is people are looking at where they're going and not looking at what the signs say (Interviewee transcript G).

Similarly, K Interviewee stated: "People are already parking on the grounds where they shouldn't be" (Interviewee transcript K). Some residents from different stakeholder segments mentioned the need for more law enforcement. The limited RCMP presence in Pinawa and the allegedly minor or no consequences for those who do not respect "no parking" signs and other regulations may encourage some people not to heed the rules. The limited enforcement resources of rural municipalities require other innovative solutions.

When signs alone did not work, Pinawa brought in paid parking during tourist season. The city enforced this parking. Pinawa increased revenue and provided jobs by giving parking tickets,

while changing some tourists' parking behaviour. A resident pass was provided for free to Pinawa residents, which allowed access to park in any of the Pinawa paid parking areas for free. The parking areas requiring payment in 2025 were at: 1) Diversion Dam (Channel float start); 2) Pinawa Suspension Bridge (Channel float end); 3) The Sundial; and 4) East side of Willis Drive with access to the beach, pool, the marina and boat launch. Pinawa passes also provided free access to the community swim at the Pinawa Pool. These paid parking areas are displayed in Figure 4.6.

The Pinawa pass effectively dealt with the interviewees' concern that tourism was costly to residents. Previously, a few interviewees mentioned their property taxes were used to serve tourists and not the residents. The parking charges for tourists only showed that Pinawa was attempting to recover these costs, as written up on Pinawa's website. However, whether that made money is uncertain as the 2024 audited budget of Pinawa does not specifically mention parking fees.

Parking charges are implemented to recover the costs of making Pinawa serviceable for visitors. Services such as waste collection, washroom and parking lot maintenance, and urban/natural upkeep are expenses to provide a positive experience for both visitors and residents. The revenue collected from parking fees is meant to recover this cost, fund the community's economic and recreational vitality, and to protect the natural beauty of this town for all to enjoy (Pinawa website, 2025).

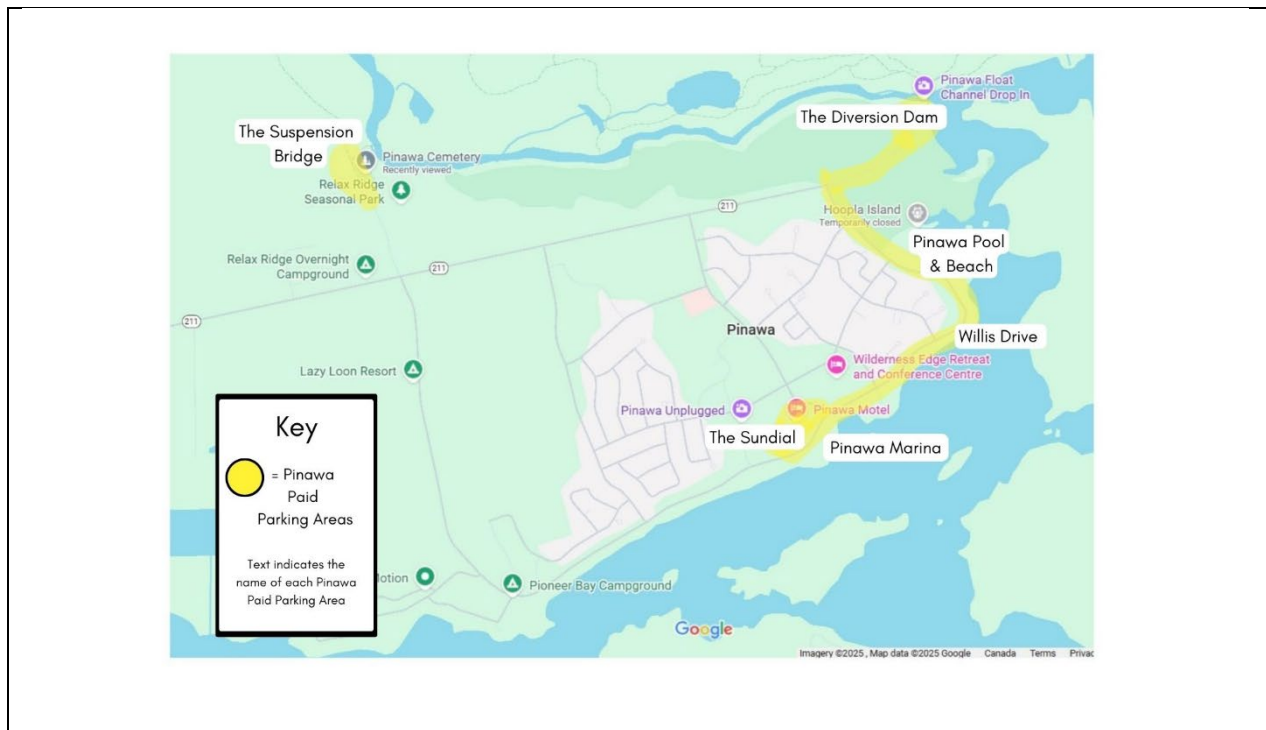


Figure 4.7: Pinawa paid parking areas. Source: Pinawa website, 2025

The Pinawa pass and paid parking areas showed that Pinawa was prepared to control tourism to ensure community well-being and cover costs. No longer could “tourists park where they shouldn’t.”

4.5 Attracting tourists who move to Pinawa.

Tourism was seen by PCDA as a vehicle to promote Pinawa to future residents. Tourism provided an opportunity to increase the chances of people knowing and liking the community. The appeal of the boreal, water, health care, infrastructure, and services was great for Winnipeggers and others, getting the Precambrian Shield in a location close to Winnipeg.

Pinawa’s newspaper editor, interviewee J, explained he knew that many people across Canada planned to retire to Pinawa:

Going back to my days as editor of the paper, we had subscriptions from people in different parts of Canada. But predominantly in northern Manitoba who got subscriptions to the paper when they were in their 40s because they knew that Pinawa was where they wanted to retire. to whether they had friends who had already moved here or not. You know some of them did. Some of them didn't. But this is where they wanted to come to retire so they had subscriptions to the paper without even ever having set foot in town. And they did end up

retiring here (Interview transcript J).

In 2021, Pinawa had a population of 1512, with over 40% 65 years of age or older (Statistics Canada, 2022); in comparison, the percentage of the Manitoba population that is 65 years or older is 17.1% (Statistics Canada, 2022). Pinawa's senior home may be both retaining people as they age and become seniors in the community, as well as attracting new seniors from other locations. The population of Pinawa is growing again after many years of decline, following the closure of the Whiteshell Laboratories.

Tourism is a strategy to recruit residents to Pinawa, as well as to spend money on tourist products and services. A local government member, the Interviewee, R, replied to a question on tourism, stating:

We want people to know the town, fall in love, and move here. It is basically a tax base expansion to replace the income from the lab ((Interview transcript R).

These taxes are needed to retain services to fill the budget gap of the Whiteshell federal nuclear lab decommissioning. A real estate agent sees tourists as her market for selling houses in Pinawa. This is building economic development that meets community needs. According to the Interviewee, I:

People wanting the privacy, the low density, buying land because it was cheap and guaranteed privacy, and the marketing of the secret, the privacy, the exclusivity, the small group in the know, "the secret" (Interview transcript I).

Tourism is discovering the market for housing in Pinawa according to the Interviewee, I:

So, the town the tourism has already helped the town because more and more people have discovered it (...) Our marketing was all about "discovered the secret". (...) And it was a well-kept secret. One of the best kept secrets, not a lot of people to come here. I didn't know (what it was) when I was moving 30 years ago (Interview transcript I).

These new residents replace the many who left Pinawa after the Whiteshell Laboratory decommissioned. Others mentioned the closing of the lab, resulting in the loss of funding for Pinawa if nothing is done. Interviewee, M, explained Pinawa needed revenue, saying Pinawa has

a "need to widen the tax base or we run out of money." The Interviewee, M, explained the budgetary impact of ACEL decommissioning:

The federal government from AECL is not going to pay for our streets. Our projected government funding goes down by over a million bucks.... I mean, we're decommissioning (Interview transcript M).

The grant in lieu seems to be especially important for the financial sustainability of Pinawa, as the Local Government District (Pinawa LGD) of Pinawa Quarterly Newsletter of April-June 2021 indicates:

The issue for the Province with regards to Pinawa will be that the Province signed the Master Agreement in 1960 which included the establishment of the Whiteshell School District. The Master Agreement does not contain an exit clause. Since AECL announced the closure of the Whiteshell Laboratories in the mid-90s, your Council and all Councils since that announcement, have maintained an ongoing dialogue with our legal Counsel on the Master Agreement since the Grant-in-Lieu of taxes accounts for approximately 40% of the Pinawa revenue and 57% of the Grant-in-Lieu is forwarded to the Whiteshell School District. (Pinawa, 2021: 2).

The 2024 Audited Budget mentions revenue for "Grants in Lieu of Taxation" (not counting grants from the Province of Manitoba or other grants) for a total of \$1,333,400, over a "total revenue" of \$6,387,537 (Pinawa, 2024). This funding represents less than the previous 40% but close to 21% of the revenue (Pinawa, 2024).

Decommissioning of the Whiteshell Laboratories started in the 1990s, reducing employment and economic opportunities (Pinawa, 2021). Some people moved away to look for work elsewhere, resulting in fewer people living, working, and spending money in Pinawa. Pinawa's current population is 80% of its size in the 1990s (Statistics Canada, 2022). The small population of Pinawa may not be large enough to sustain some activities, programs, businesses, and a full-service hospital for community development.

As taxpayers are wanted, what kind of tourist makes a good resident and taxpayer? The desired tourist profile is families and seniors who are: educated and interested in nature. Thus,

Pinawa worked to retain educated and nature-loving former lab employees in senior housing for active seniors. This community investment model is called the “Pinawa model” of combining local investing with grants to provide a local solution that seems oriented to retain or attract a well-defined audience. The highest number of doctorates per capita in Manitoba provides a lot of assets to work with in terms of social, cultural, and educational capital. The high education levels of community members probably helped people in Pinawa to realize the achievements that the interviewees are so proud of. This higher education in Pinawa comes with higher financial assets as well. Without a nuclear laboratory to attract highly educated people, this high level of education may not be sustained. However, with remote work becoming popular after the COVID-19 pandemic, professional people are increasingly able to work from anywhere (Deloitte, 2021). This may allow more professionals to take up residence in Pinawa before retiring if they can work remotely.

Tourism is seen as a way to promote Pinawa as a place to live. The theory of change logic is: If "nature-loving educated people" visit Pinawa for tourism, they would consider moving to Pinawa. The new residents would widen the population numbers, a vital community development goal which will also bring lasting economic benefits, as they will buy goods and pay taxes in Pinawa. In the 2024 Audited Budget, property taxes were more than \$1.9 million CAD, representing 30% of the revenue (Pinawa, 2024)

Will tourism attract homebuyers to Pinawa? Tourism attracted homebuyers, according to one interviewee, who talked about housing sales and retirement plans of visitors. Further, tourists were a main source for home buyers, as Interviewee, I, stated:

But it did take 23 years to sell phase one and phase two....But after February 2021, all of a sudden, we weren't in the last bit of phase two and boom, 23 years to sell 2/3 of the development, and then in 2020 and 2021, in two years, everything that was left was sold (Interviewee transcript I).

The interviewees were concerned that tourism could backfire if the current channel float

style of tourism continues or expands. Currently, Pinawa's summer visitors to the channel float are not exactly the tourists the locals want. These visitors come looking for an adventure, and some see them as people who leave their trash behind, disrespecting nature. Beach town partiers are not considered good candidates to become potential new residents.

4.6 Pinawa is missing tourist infrastructure.

Pinawa's infrastructure serves community needs for healthy living but lacks tourist infrastructure. There are no spas or coffee shops, for example. For a small town, Pinawa has great, modern infrastructure – school, hospital, nursing home, curling/golf club, paved roads, a co-operative grocery store, bank, art gallery, and water/sewage systems. Pinawa was a company town, and any business needed approval from the company to operate. This company's control seems to have impacted the limited infrastructure for retail space today in the community.

The public infrastructure available is appropriate and modern for the current population in the community. An interviewee mentioned Pinawa's modern infrastructure, being beautiful, stating, "The fact that we do have like beautiful physical infrastructure is like a bonus. It makes it all work." Shariat-Zadeh and Thompson (2025) found that Pinawa was a fifteen-minute town, having everything required to meet health, school, and food needs, within a fifteen-minute walk from home. The Interlake-Eastern Health Authority provides many services at Pinawa Hospital, almost unheard of in a small community. Services offered include acute care (with seventeen beds), cancer care, dieticians, diagnostics, occupational therapy, palliative care, spiritual care, and physiotherapy.

Community needs and desires were surveyed regarding tourist infrastructure in the fifteen surveys and in some informal and non-recorded conversations with key informants. Many agreed that more hotels, restaurants, and tourist shops were needed. Pinawa has no luxury hotels and one restaurant/bar at the curling/golf club, and a few food trucks in the summer. Several interviews

mention the lack of products and services and retail space for rent, which creates another barrier for entrepreneurs offering products and services beyond tourism. New businesses, luxury hotels, and rental space require considerable investment. Without rental space available, a commercial enterprise requires buying or long-term land rental and construction. If the business is unsuccessful, this is sunk capital. The motel and a former company dormitory provide economic lodgings, but with limited or no food or other services. The Interviewee, J, discusses the limited upscale options for eating or spending: “Pinawa does not have Winnipeg's luxury hotel and restaurant infrastructure” (Interview transcript J).

Pinawa already has an excellent example of glamping nearby with the boat houses at Whiteshell Provincial Park. Glamping provides a unique experience with high privacy from the low density of tourists. The infrastructure may be rustic, but it is high-quality and has a nice design. The customer service and "perks" must be impeccable: booking, transportation, cleaning, bedding, food and post-service. “Glamping is where stunning nature meets modern luxury. It’s a way to experience the untamed and completely unique parts of the world—without having to sacrifice... comforts.” (Glamping, n.d.). “Glamping is all about making your camping experience comfy and luxurious. Electricity, plush blankets, running water, mood lighting, scrumptious meals — all these creature comforts and more are what make glamping an ideal vacation for many” (Glamping, n.d.).



Figure 4.8: *Glamping Houseboats, Modified: Voyager Houseboats webpage image capture.*

Pinawa should explore how to expand the concept to land and through all the seasons. The Voyager Houseboats is a current Pinawa business, providing exclusive accommodations in a remote location in the Whiteshell Park's water. Their small boathouses leave from Pinawa, providing a great view with high levels of comfort. See Figure 4.7 for their advertisement. This boat adventure includes the ingredients of tourism products and exploits the idea of contact with nature and uniqueness, without too much human interference. Interestingly, Pinawa does not appear when searching on the Glamping website, despite the Navigating Pinawa glamping business and Voyager.

Few retail opportunities exist to capture tourist dollars, according to the Interviewee, L:

There's not enough retail opportunity, no rental shops, you know, no souvenir shops. All of that industry that caters to the visitor experience, were completely underdeveloped. And I mean, it's a huge opportunity for sure" (Interview transcript L).

The tourist area needs investment and planning. The investment in building commercial space is a huge barrier, according to the Interviewee, I:

But when you put bricks and mortar to that kind of industry, who then makes the investment? Do you have to provide the bricks and mortar so that a business can lease the space and the months where it's profitable to be in business? (Interview transcript

I)

The existing information centres are not near the beach or other tourist locations. Thus, the Interviewee L criticized these as being ineffective.

(An) information centre used to have the prime retail spot in the mall.... And they, the PCDC, relocated their space to Lewis Business Center, which is not an ideal location. (Interview transcript L).

People from Pinawa discussed their interest in attracting investment for a more extensive hospitality and/or retail structure. However, any new buildings downtown, such as apartments, condominiums or hospitality structures, could offer accessory commercial units. Small commercial spaces in larger commercial spaces could offer retail or restaurant space for community members and tourists to use. For example, retail space in the Lakeview Hotel in Gimli, Manitoba, provides business opportunities. Accessory commercial units increase the opportunities for new enterprises in town, lowering the barriers to investment. A commercial area would attract visitors and provide services and products for tourists and locals all year round.



Figure 4.9: Accessory Commercial Units in Resort. Source: Lakeview Gimli Resort website

Pinawa should explore what is desirable and possible for services and products. More food

options, rentals, excursions and guides, accommodation options, and picnic areas. Also promoting regional tourism together with neighbouring communities. For example, “The Spicy Radish” restaurant advertises in the Pinawa Discover Guide 2019-2020 as being 25 minutes from Pinawa. Including nearby businesses in Pinawa’s menu benefits both the community and nearby businesses.



Figure 4.10: Nearby Food Options. Modified from: Pinawa Discover Guide (2019-20)- Spicy Radish.

Picnic infrastructure is needed to support tourism and business. The lack of seats or food in Pinawa is not welcoming residents or tourists to Pinawa's waterfront. Infrastructure and other infrastructure in public spaces, even if pop-up, may require careful consultation with some stakeholders. Indoor and outdoor patios could support businesses, as seen in The Forks. Visitors and tourists want to eat and drink while enjoying the waterfront. The thousands of visitors to Pinawa each week in the summer, visiting the channel float, could tour the Pinawa waterfront,

where food trucks/boats offer food. These picnic areas will likely be enjoyed by locals, too.

Madden (2021) recommends placemaking triangulation to create a public space where people want to be. She recommends bringing together food venues with activities, garbage cans and seats. These activities (trails, swimming, boats, and a mall) create synergies, facilitating convergences and a meeting place (Madden, 2021).

4.7 Pinawa Media Promotes Adventure Rather than Wellbeing.

Pinawa's best promotion seems to be word of mouth. Visitors tell close friends and family about Pinawa. However, at the moment of the research (2020-2022), the media promotion in the Travel Manitoba Magazine seems to be largely focused on summer and the Channel Float. Efforts to elaborate different messages for different targets would diversify and promote Pinawa.

Promotions for “Pinawa” sometimes misdirect people to the old Pinawa and its dam, which is 10 km away from the community of Pinawa. In Figure 4.11, this poster from Travel Manitoba shows "Old Pinawa," the Old Dam, calling it “Pinawa”. People can visit the old dam without getting into town, as I observed heavy traffic in and out of the attraction, without turning into New Pinawa. Two places called Pinawa, nearby to each other, are confusing and may misdirect people away from the town of Pinawa. Applying the term, Old Pinawa to the past town site, which is now a park, and image branding of the current town of Pinawa could differentiate these different places.

SHARE



PINAWA

This resort-like community offers adventure for every season; hike, bike or golf in summer. Ski the scenic cross-country trails in winter or access the network of snowmobile trails that connect with the Can-Am Trail. Imagine yourself in a place, then discover the secret in Pinawa.

AMENITIES

BLOGS

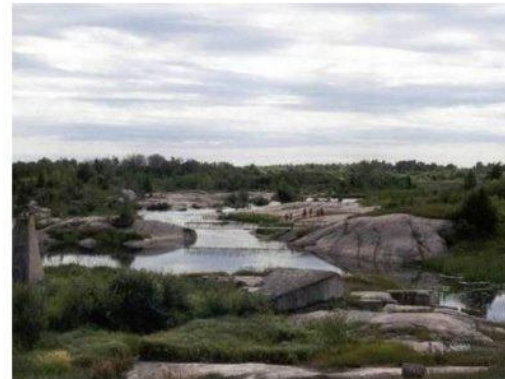
Birding

Manitoba History

Self-guided tour

Service in French

Wildlife/Nature Viewing



Pinawa

Chat

Figure 4.11: Old Pinawa advertised as (new) Pinawa. Modified: Travel Manitoba online.

Some brochures promote the values most community members share – family and nature.

Figure 4.12 from Travel Manitoba captures nature and family. Pinawa stakeholders shared their affinity with sailing, canoeing, and rowing, based on their expressions about desired and potential tourism. The message in the text says, ‘Adventure Awaits in Pinawa,’ when a more “contemplative” visitor is preferred by the Pinawa residents. A different season, activity, and aspect of Pinawa could be promoted to develop other seasons and alleviate the already questioned pressure on summer.

Adventure Awaits in Pinawa...




Available all summer!
Located at Pinawa's Public Beach: #5 Willis Drive
hoopla.island@gmail.com
www.hoopla.island.com




Rent a cozy, 4-person houseboat for an overnight stay in Whiteshell Park!
431-996-5280 | voyageurhouseboats@gmail.com
www.voyageurhouseboats.com




Splash into Summer with Pinawa's Top Tubing Team!
204-751-0405 | info@floatandpaddle.ca
www.floatandpaddle.ca




Make yourself at home & we will make the rest!
204-753-2357 | info@pinawamotel.com
www.pinawamotel.com




The Course that Nature Built
Pro Shop: 204-753-2294 | Restaurant: 204-753-2760
www.pinawacub.mb.ca



Imagine Yourself in a place...
204-753-5170
@pinawa.com
www.pinawa.com

Figure 4.12: Pinawa's Tourism Industry Ads. Modified: Travel Manitoba 2022.

Several interviewees saw some of the new tourist infrastructure as derailing existing plans. Decisions to the waterfront plan created conflict, with the Ironwood Park committee feeling sabotaged by the council. Interviewee S talked about:

There already is a plan for the Ironwood Park and the defensiveness I think is because the local council does not necessarily respect that plan. Includes all aspects of Ironwood Park, the mowing of the grass, the handling of trees, replacement of trees, the kind of furniture, the pergola as part of that. So, there's an extensive plan there. So, let's hope that putting new benches and tables in respects that plan because it's the unique plan that unifies the entire waterfront and other areas. If we get all kinds of different benches and picnic table designs then it just all falls apart. It loses the uniqueness (Interview transcript S).

Some interviewees were concerned that more recent tourist infrastructure are bad design choices. Decisions are made that conflict with the plan for the waterfront. For example, Pinawa designs for benches, carved from local wood, were planned for the trail along the river nearby to activities and food, to exemplify the local nature-loving, active culture. Residents of Pinawa developed the plan, and so were invested in its success, and frustrated that this plan for carved benches was shelved. In contrast, the Hoopla Island and the new benches on the Ironwood trail are detracting from nature, not durable nor aesthetic. Interviewee K describes the recent tourist infrastructure additions as a hodgepodge, creating a lack of coherent design that contrast with existing Pinawa nature thematic and motif :

This is a core tourism attraction thing. If there's no specification that design has to respect what's already there, then you're creating something hodgepodge. They have to somehow have a vision and stick to the vision. The PCDC, frankly, has been very poor doing that and the council is very poor doing that (Interview transcript K).

Hoopla Island is a giant yellow and green floating trampoline with slides and other amusement aspects. Interviewee E described this new infrastructure addition for tourism as a sore thumb:

I don't have a problem with the island [Hoopla Island, a huge floatie]. I think it's just

another thing to do. I think it's fine, but it's also like it sticks out like a sore thumb. It's like you have this sort of beautiful green landscape then you have like this yellow and green, fluorescent blob on the water. I think that's what they think tourism is. They think tourism is people coming in making noise, getting drunk and then dumping their trash and getting out of here. So Pinawa probably is maxed (maximized) out on how much I want to call like party tourism.” (Interview transcript E)

The number of summer visitors challenged the public infrastructure regarding traffic, parking, garbage, and public washrooms, to name a few. The local government responded quickly, building public washrooms, installing garbage cans, and building more parking spots, but challenges to the infrastructure remain. Developing tourism infrastructure may create additional demand instead of solving traffic and parking challenges. Hymel (2018), in his article "If you build it, they will drive: Measuring induced demand for vehicle travel in urban areas," shows that additional lanes on the road add the same proportion of additional traffic. In other words, with more road investment, we may end up with an increase in traffic.

Investments other than roads should be the priority for tourism (OECD, 2025). Investing to better absorb the current volume of traffic/parking by expanding capacity could result in the same traffic and parking issues, with more cars. A higher volume of visitors to the town during the high tourist season or seasons would probably add to the residents' frustration. More parking lots would be empty, barren landscapes in the low season. The solution I proposed during my internship was a combination of different measures, considering the responses and comments from the interviews with residents focused on:

- 1) Easing the tensions of competition for limited infrastructure between residents and tourists. For example, using existing parking spaces away from the shoreline but with sidewalks to connect the parking to the waterfront. Rather than focusing on tourists' infrastructure only, any investment in infrastructure should improve well-being for the community, too, not only for tourists.

- 2) Changing the promotional media of what Pinawa offers, to increase the possibility of

attracting tourists, and to attract new residents. Potential residents would be tourists who enjoy Pinawa in all seasons, not just winter, who are less loud, nature-loving, educated and with an interest in cultural arts. This resident description contrasts with the thrill-seeking tourists wanting “adventure” day-trip visitors to the float.

3) Improving communication channels between Pinawa’s local government, tourist business owners and Pinawa residents to develop a CED plan considerate of tourism. Residents know the place-based and community assets of Pinawa and their dreams for their community. Pinawa, by planning place-based CED, can identify appropriate strategies and build capacity in the community for governance, human resources and other resources.

4.8 Summary

Interviewees all agree that Pinawa is an excellent place for tourism, having great attractions and nature. However, a beach town is not desired by Pinawa’s interviewees. Residents want to avoid Pinawa becoming a party town for tourists, to remain attractive for nature-loving, educated tourists who want to move to Pinawa. Many interviewees wanted tourism controlled to reduce or eliminate the nuisances of improper parking, litter, violence, and other issues. Controlling tourism is wanted by all for CED benefit. This problem of tourism destroying the cohesiveness and attractiveness of the Pinawa community was mentioned during interviews. The key issue around tourism is the type of visitors and whether they are good potential residents. The Pinawa model of CED could attract tourists that want to be residents if carefully planned, considering the vision for Pinawa development and place-based economic issues.

Some interviewees call Pinawa “the little town that could” for a reason. The Pinawa community effectively created housing for seniors through CED, with community members being investors and shareholders. The weaknesses of the lack of infrastructure could be solved by repeating the Pinawa experience of housing for seniors, for tourism. Also, glamping and other low-cost structures could work with the entrepreneurial nature of Pinawa.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The discussion objective is to analyze the themes, their relationship with the current tourism strategy, and the proposed solutions, considering the CED literature. More importantly, to take one step back and check the acceptability of sustainable tourism CED strategies with Pinawa residents. Any CED must be a community-driven process with the community identifying problems and solutions to tackle economic, social and environmental issues important for the viability of the community (Manitoba Agriculture Food and Rural Development, 2018).

The seven themes that emerged from the interviews are:

- 1) Pinawa is more than a beach town.
- 2) Pinawa, the little town that could.
- 3) Tourist businesses have started, and they make money.
- 4) Control the tourism.
- 5) Attracting tourists who move to Pinawa.
- 6) Pinawa is missing tourist infrastructure and,
- 7) Promoting Pinawa as Adventure is problematic.

Different themes from the interviews emphasize different CED aspects. These divisions consider Krawchenko's distinction between endogenous and exogenous aspects. Krawchenko defines endogenous development as "bottom up development"(page 7) and talks about exogenous development as external factors of the community, that could be institutional, or directly the existence or lack of private investment, with market-led agendas. In analyzing the themes into either community, economic or development aspects, I found most of the themes focused on local community issues, as shown in Figure 5.1. The themes include four local community themes: leadership and resources (endogenous aspects), one on the exogenous economic aspects, and two on development. The community aspects consider social and human

aspects to bring about the community that interviewees want. These community themes are about community leadership and capacity. The economic theme considers the expanded external tourist dollars flowing to Pinawa, due to COVID-19 (an exogenous event) shifting tourist approaches towards regional tourism. The development themes are focused on physical infrastructure, considering that Pinawa would need housing and tourist infrastructure to attract the right kind of tourist. This development area is both about leadership to attract external resources, dependent on external factors such as interest rates to finance building, and local leadership, to refocus tourist promotion towards their ideal tourist.

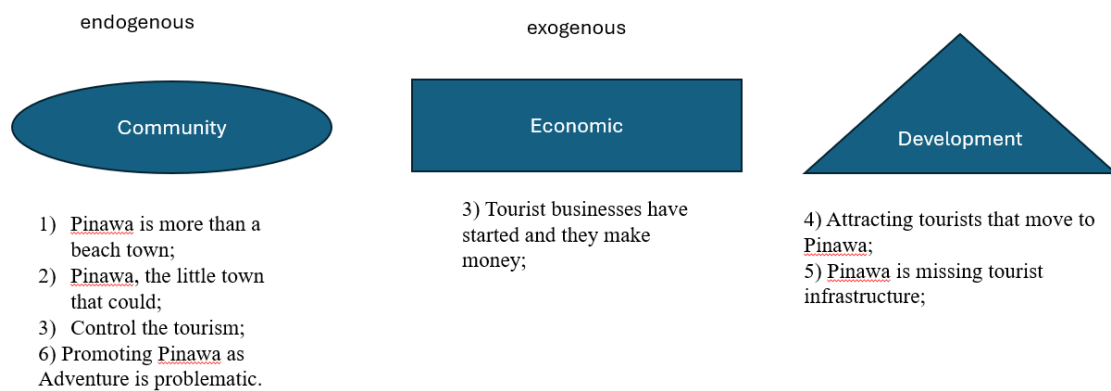


Figure 5.1: Tourism strategy themes from interviews with Pinawa residents focused on either Community, Economic or Development areas.

The tensions and power differentials between residents may skew CED plans and implementation to one aspect or another, but a holistic consideration of all the issues is recommended by the Neechi principles and place-based principles.

5.1 Community

Pinawa is a rural, tight-knit settler community surrounded by beautiful wild landscapes.

Pinawa has a unique history as a company town for a nuclear laboratory, resulting in the highest

number of doctorates per capita in Manitoba. Residents who focused on community, mentioning tourism as a disturbance of their quiet lifestyle in nature, which risked changing the community they love. Interviewees, both new and old residents, felt disconnected from the approach of the Pinawa Community Development Corporation, which was attracting adventure tourists. Interestingly, some of these interviewees were invested in cultural activities. These interviewees worried that the design of public spaces was downgrading the brand of Pinawa. Pinawa had previously adopted its own cultural style focused on nature. They worried that the approach did not focus on Pinawa's uniqueness and would result in the "wrong" type of tourist.

The research of interviewing diverse residents is a step towards inclusive CED planning regarding tourism and other options. Hopefully, this participatory research commenced a community-driven process on tourism strategies, which was recommended in my community report. The limited mention about the impact of lab decommissioning on municipal revenues reveals the need for communication and conversations for an inclusive CED process. Many of these community members embrace many Neechi principles, including local decision-making, public health, physical environment, neighbourhood stability and human dignity. To not exclude Pinawa residents and consider economic issues, the issue becomes what economic development initiatives would foster and sustain the community.

5.2 Economic Development

Economic development was not a main consideration for a Pinawa tourism strategy for most interviewees. However, some new tourist businesses in Pinawa are making money from tourism. This is benefiting the local businesses as some tourists come for the natural attraction of the river float and beach to holiday here. By Pinawa using the natural environment, the river float, as the attraction, their economy is based on using local services and benefiting from the attractiveness of the place, following place-based economics (OECD, 2025). As this channel float is sustainable, if

the river continues to flow, this should provide long-term employment for residents. Long-term employment of residents will require a local re-investment of profits, local capacity building and local decision making, following the Neechi principles (Bernas & Reimer, 2011; Silver & Loxley, 2007).

Pinawa's economic options are changing its development stage (Dickinson, 2015)/ Pinawa is winding down its first stage, where the economic development of the Whiteshell Laboratories, funded by AECL, created employment and tax revenues. Pinawa's second stage, where retaining business and professionals was considered key for taxes and jobs, continues at a small scale. Some lab remediation work is being undertaken, but also some seniors and professionals who were part of AECL are investing and spending in Pinawa through a seniors' home. Finally, Pinawa's third stage of employment creation through small local businesses is beginning. This stage typically focuses largely on the knowledge economy that engages young talent and local entrepreneurs. Pinawa already has talent and entrepreneurs in the knowledge economy and remains attractive to younger people of the creative class, who can work digitally. The interviewees included local entrepreneurs, some older, and a new resident that is young and part of the knowledge economy. Tourism entrepreneurs included people from all ages, including younger people. These people are part of the creative class. This third stage is largely where the tourist strategy fits. However, if Pinawa rushes to bring many visitors, focused on adventure, the longer game of attracting residents in the knowledge economy is put in jeopardy. Adventure tourism that attracts many party day-tripping tourists is a counterproductive strategy to attracting educated, nature-loving tourists.

Community economic development, regarding tourism in Pinawa, must consider the tourism market. The key market, specifically the ideal tourist, needs to be the focus of promotional material. The party tourist is not a desirable visitor for the community residents and the economy. For example, the Channel Float attraction currently attracts tourists who are loud

and disturb nature. The Channel Float is a free public attraction located in the government district of Pinawa but not owned or operated by Pinawa. Prior to charging a parking fee, which is a recent development, there was no cost for tourists to visit the channel float if they brought their own flotation device. Many tourists visited the Channel Float in the Provincial park, adjacent to Pinawa, bringing their own flotation devices and libations. Not having loud, littering tourists causing traffic hazards, due to dangerous parking situation. Although the parking issues have been largely resolved by improving parking controls, other issues remain. Although people are asked not to bring alcohol to the Provincial park, many tourists do so, without much or any enforcement. People drinking in an unregulated public place, the Channel Float, is often not compatible with a family or nature experience. Interviewees see public drinking as something that should be better regulated and controlled, to not disrupt this family-friendly environment.

The Channel Float could be marketed as family-friendly. According to those interviewed, the Channel Float is an ideal family destination if there were no drunk partiers. Pinawa is already attracting children and youth with the Hoopla Island play infrastructure at the beach, which draws families into town. Hoopla Island engages children and youth in play and exercise. This is positive, but there are negative aspects. This space, marketed to children and youth, costs money to use and takes over most of the only beach. Hoopla Island competes at a sensory level, making this previously quiet space noisy and an “eyesore”, according to one interviewee.

Another consideration is extending tourism to other seasons. A beach town has a short tourism season. The undesirable beach town for day-trippers caters to businesses that are only open in summer. However, different businesses that offer longer stays to a very different tourist, closer to the ideal tourist, could focus on nature contact and a more contemplative experience. For example, the campgrounds bring people who keep coming back to spend money in the community and potentially will become part of the community.

Infrastructure is needed that nourishes both tourists and residents. The food trucks and

regional businesses cater to both residents and visitors. These businesses provide something many interviewees mentioned as lacking: more gastronomic alternatives. This increases community well-being.

5.3 Development

Infrastructure should be developed with the goal of attracting new residents and conserving nature. The interviewees wanted development focused on the knowledge and nature economy at Pinawa. This focus on caring for the community and environment aligns with regenerative tourism. The interviewee's desired development path is in line with the sustainable livelihood framework (SLC, 2025) and place-based economy principles (OECD, 2025). These models consider the local sustainable livelihood assets and place-based domains of geography, resources, and workforce. By analyzing Pinawa's human, community, natural and social capitals, the networks and linking to government and non-government organizations will allow Pinawa to access external resources. The OECD (2025) model considers tourism and the need to attract visitors, talent, and investment. The OECD model also emphasizes the importance of natural capital and sustainability for visitors and investors. The nature, culture, and high educational level of Pinawa are what make the community attractive to bring talent, investment and residents.

Pinawa is located on the northern edge of the Whiteshell Provincial Park, with this park including many sacred Indigenous sites, including Bannock Point. The GBF, which is adopted verbatim in Canada's Nature Strategy, rethinks parks as protected areas to consider Indigenous rights, biodiversity and community engagement. Rather than develop the land in a way that disturbs biodiversity, the GBF, that Canada has committed to, requires that the land and water be protected, while respecting Indigenous rights and local community control. The rights of Indigenous Peoples mentioned in this GBF are defined in UNDRIP, including governance and active stewardship of land and water (CBD, 2022; Thapa, Thompson & Hill, 2025). In contrast to

non-Indigenous people's failure at biodiversity protection and ecological integrity through colonial methods, Indigenous Peoples representing 6% of the global population effectively protect 80% or more of the global biodiversity (CBD, 2022). This GBF should give cause for Pinawa's local community to have a bigger voice in managing the nearby Park and work more closely with Indigenous peoples.

The GBF transforms area-based conservation from undermining to recognizing Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, innovation, rights, and roles as the primary land stewards (CBD, 2022). The Whiteshell Park area contains many petroforms, with the area considered very sacred to the Anishinaabe (Maytwayashing, 2025). The Pinawa region would benefit from Indigenous people co-governing or governing these parks, particularly Bannock Point, which needs more protection as a ceremonial site. Indigenous Peoples' inclusion in tourist strategies and land governance can do wonders for land appreciation, as visible at the Brokenhead trail of Debwendon. Seeing the land as sacred and undertaking traditional land use practices under Indigenous leadership in parks, trails and waterways adjacent to Pinawa would transform tourists and community members' relationship with the land and waters. This worldview of seeing the land as alive could be very effective at conserving land and bringing people who are serious about learning from nature to reside at Pinawa. Pinawa, like every settler community, needs to consider how they should approach land-based reconciliation, considering the GBF goals of reversing the environmental crises.

5.4 Community Economic Development

Community economic development takes time. Community economic development at Fogo Island is a successful social enterprise. This long process of CED taps into and builds community assets – natural, physical, financial, social and human- considering local leadership, resources and stories. These assets include traditions, culture, hospitality and community links. These human and cultural assets lead the Shorefast social enterprise process for place-based

economics (Charles, 2021). The five principles in the PLACE framework are: “Promote community leaders, Link divergent perspectives, Amplify local capacities & assets, Convey compelling stories, and Engage both/and thinking” (Charles, 2021: 6).

This place-based economics attracted the needed tourism to bring money and create jobs to keep the Fogo community afloat (Charles, 2021). The process was described as long, with many deep dialogues with the community leading to a serious investment of private money. The principles of their PLACE framework include the promotion of community leaders as a necessary step for other achievements (Charles, 2021). Cobb, the founder of Shorefast, shared that no local government is strong enough to drive economic development in solitude. The community needs to bring external or private funding and perspectives while engaging with the community around kitchen tables (Charles, 2021). The good intentions and ideas of Pinawa’s Community Development Corporation may be undermined without community consensus and collaboration. Some interviewees expressed suspicions about Pinawa’s approach, due to a lack of knowledge about Pinawa’s plan.

Foster and Main's (2020) research on tourism with small maritime communities found that community planning legwork was important. Pinawa communicating adventure and channel float activities issues sponsored by Pinawa, as shown in the Figure 4.12, are part of the problem. Pinawa’s communication of a community tourism campaign needs to be based on what tourism they want. No desired target was defined in this research by the different interviewees. The community-oriented interviewees wanted a less noisy, more educated visitor who loved nature. This visitor should be someone who appreciates the community and may want to, in time, live there. One interviewee was an eco-tourism operator, who saw his eco-tourist clients as the ideal residents, with their higher income and interest in learning about nature. Another interviewee was a business person profiting from tourists who was less selective about the type of tourist. That

interviewee wanted the high volume of visitors and further investment in tourism infrastructure.

5.4.1 Community economic development and Pinawa model applied to tourism.

Pinawa was often referred to by different interviewees as “the little town that could”. The Pinawa Model of community investment worked for the community's need for seniors’ housing and could be used for tourism infrastructure that benefits the community (Rummery & Iverson, 2015). For Pinawa, a big piece of infrastructure would likely be an indoor swimming pool, resort, mall or convention centre. These attractions would undoubtedly increase the number of visitors, traffic, and disturbance to neighbours and nature, among other impacts.

The Pinawa Model was developed by Rummery and Iverson (2015). This model is a capitalist social enterprise model for community investment in the needed infrastructure of a senior home and potentially other infrastructure. Although the seniors’ home is not a co-operative, the Neechi principles of local investment and local decision-making remain relevant. This infrastructure focused on the community needs of a vulnerable population, seniors, retained residents and employment in Pinawa. By the community investing and managing the home with the health centre, maximum community control and benefit were realized. This model incorporates many aspects of the sustainable livelihoods framework and the place-based economics model.

Figure 5.2 tries to portray a revised Pinawa model for tourism. This model shows how many local assets come together to create a sweet spot for tourism and community development. The Pinawa model applied to tourism would have local investment from Pinawa's residents. A collective investment model, such as an investment fund, typically requires a moderate or small investment from several individuals. This calculated, relatively minor risk for a local group of residents joining efforts to invest in the local development has the benefit of those investors being already "invested" in the community. Local investors would also personally benefit from new developments, such as a health club/resort’s year-round gym and swimming pool, coffee shop or

new retail space development, beyond any return on investment. Local investors will benefit by improving the community where they live and their quality of life as a social enterprise, beyond objectives of profit, focusing on providing the service.

The Pinawa model applied to tourism.



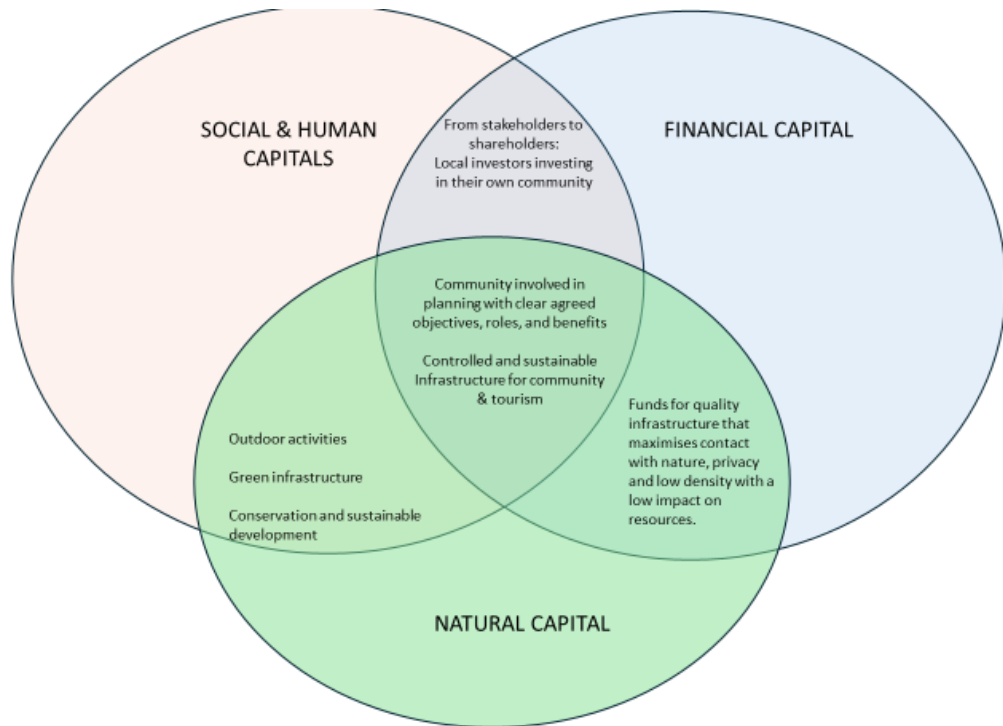


Figure 5.2: Pinawa Model applied to Tourism

Pinawa's model may be a cooperative or social enterprise for profit or not for profit. Cooperatives are democratic businesses and last longer. According to Brunette (2022), 77% of Canadian businesses that converted to cooperatives are "still standing". A "character" coffee/tea shop, offering wildcrafted local teas and local berry ice creams, such as at Fogo's ice cream shop gives people a sense of place (Horbovetz, 2018). This gathering place provides a place-based attraction for locals and visitors if unique. An ice cream, restaurant or tea/coffee place allows people to savour the community flavours, such as blueberries and labrador tea. This shop creates employment and could be a place to start (or come back to) working. The rationale for the community developing its own solutions to provide hospitality and gastronomy services under a cooperative or social enterprise instead of a more usual private for-profit business. For example, in Sooke, Vancouver Island, a group of residents formed a co-op to keep a café open because: "Without this planned purchase, we would have no central location in which to drink coffee, chat,

plan, and organize. Their goal is simple: keep the coffee shop open with the great employees it has, and “drink coffee and visit with them and each other” (Cooperatives First, n.d.).

The Pinawa model is an example of CED. Community investment for the senior home followed all the Neechi principle of local re-investment of profits, use of locally produced goods and services, production of goods and services for local use, long-term employment of residents, local skill development, public health, physical environment, neighbourhood stability, and human dignity (Bernas & Reimer, 2011; Silver & Loxley, 2007). This community investment in tourism should focus on serving the local community too and consider these Neechi principles.

Tourism planning requires a longer term, slower-paced planning process to ensure sustainability of the development. To build a sustainable community relies on listening to the community and involving it in identifying problems, goals, and solutions (Silver & Loxley, 2007). This community planning requires negotiation and likely multiple compromises. In the long term, the viability of the community, not only its businesses, depends on attracting new residents. As mentioned before, paradoxically, attracting new residents depends heavily on preserving the current atmosphere of the community, its strong connection with nature and relaxed pace, and a low-impact tourism with carefully designed infrastructure. The conservation of nature and community atmosphere is the path to CED. Sustainable tourism, a sustainable lifestyle, and community consultation to secure their support, as mentioned by Foster and Main (2020), lead to slower but safer ways with less conflict. In the specific context of Pinawa, sustainable tourism refers to volumes, intensity, and type of tourism that does not disrupt the sustainability of the community in terms of its lifestyle. This idea of not modifying community life seems to go beyond tourism, but tourism was the most disruptive element identified by interviewees regarding their desired way of life.

The Pinawa Model for tourism focuses on community wellbeing and viability, which has economic aspects. Tourism should not focus only on short-term profit but on the delivery of

services and products needed for community quality of life and protecting the environment, considering the long-term. If the tourism development in Pinawa is extremely successful in terms of profit, but damages nature and community well-being, Pinawa as a whole will suffer. This profit-focused tourism would be disruptive to both nature and residents' well-being. This profit-oriented approach would redistribute material and symbolic resources such as social and financial capital, changing the power balance among stakeholders, privileging economic and development aspects over community ones. This unsustainable tourism would be economic development, but not for the community, creating a different Pinawa unattractive to residents and Pinawa's ideal nature-loving tourists that would consider Pinawa home.

5.5 My reflection

Pinawa, I discovered, had a unique history and population, but the small-town dynamics were familiar to me. The themes identified by interviewees were not so much about technical or funding issues, but about community dynamics that are particular to rural communities. After finishing the internship and delivering recommendations to the Pinawa Community Development Corporation, I immediately started working full-time as an Economic Development Officer in a Rural Municipality of Southeast Manitoba. As in Pinawa, I started noticing similar issues, dynamics and even characters of my town back in rural Argentina with the different communities in Manitoba.

Rural communities share much in common. Like Pinawa, other rural communities in Canada and the world are one-industry towns or resource towns that often fail. The shifts are for varied reasons – the closing of the lab at Pinawa, the big agriculture making small farms less viable, the mines closing, the demise of forestry and fisheries, etc. Thus, with the past industry no longer viable, new community development, including tourism, may be an option. Further, the more general rural dynamics and how they influence community economic development also provide much to consider.

5.6 Summary

Seven themes emerged from the interviews. These seven themes focus on CED, with different focuses. The four community elements of the themes for tourism economic strategy are: 1) Pinawa is more than a beach town; 2) Pinawa, the little town that could; 3) Control the tourism; and 7) Promoting Pinawa as Adventure is problematic. Economic development is the main focus of one theme: 4) Tourist businesses have started, and they make money. Finally, development, to build the infrastructure required for economic and community development, is the focus of the following two themes: 5) Attracting tourists who move to Pinawa; and 6) Pinawa is missing tourist infrastructure. The Pinawa model shows the community can successfully engage in CED, which could be applied to tourism. Pinawa's model employs many aspects of place-based economics and the sustainable livelihoods framework to increase the attractiveness of their community, while also working with community needs and assets.

This Pinawa's focus is on the nature and knowledge economy in the third age of industry. Any tourism or CED strategy has to consider the Pinawa residents' goals for their community, but also land protection in light of the GBF (CBD, 2021). The environmental crisis signals that the colonial approach is not working, in contrast to the Indigenous land governance that did preserve biodiversity and ecosystem integrity.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Community members interviewed had different views of tourism, but all saw the need to “control tourism” to protect the environment and community cohesion. The attractive force for Pinawa’s tourism is the pristine, natural attractions to engage with nature at the time the global biodiversity framework is confronting the biodiversity crash.

The approach to tourism in Pinawa should consider CED primarily. Tourism offers opportunities to create capacity to deal with the crisis created by the demise of Pinawa as an AECL company town. Pinawa’s one industry run by AECL is decommissioning. Pinawa and other rural communities share the vulnerability of being a one company town. The threat of a single large employer closing, decommissioning, or moving to another community is common to resource towns. The massive job losses when the one company closes in a one company town typically results in population decreases as people have to leave to chase jobs elsewhere. If the Pinawa population is reduced below a certain level, revenue sources, products and services are reduced, which threatens the survival of Pinawa businesses and the quality of infrastructure. Pinawa businesses need to make ends meet to remain open, and that depends directly on sales volume. Local infrastructure and services depend on a local government budget, which limits services and infrastructure. These limitations are linked to low population levels, which directly impact on the quality of life.

A Pinawa’s approach to CED could be able to respond and evolve this community to sustainable and perhaps regenerative tourism. Pinawa’s hope for tourists that care for nature and are committed to the community, to the point they want to move there, are in line with regenerative tourism values. Regenerative tourism is not about just sustaining the status quo, to limit negative impacts, but building community capacity to protect nature considering socioecological approaches. A strategy must consider that CED is not an annual crop for the

next season, but about planting trees for future generations.

6.1 Uniqueness should be important for a Pinawa green tourism strategy

Pinawa is unique in many ways. Pinawa is both unique and typical of rural communities. Place-based and capitals are unique to Pinawa.. The landscape is extraordinarily beautiful with an uncommon lazy float attraction near the Whiteshell Provincial Park of Canada's Precambrian shield. This eastern Manitoba location of Pinawa has almost 2800 square kilometres of protected wilderness parkland.

People are willing to pay more for a unique experience, regardless of the infrastructure. Although Pinawa does not have a luxury hotel and restaurant infrastructure, its access to nature is considered unrivalled, as Interviewee J said: “neither Winnipeg nor anyone in Manitoba has the combination of water, trails, landscape, community, and accessibility Pinawa has” (Interview transcript J). Anyone with money can build a luxury hotel, but no money can build the natural and accessible beauty surrounding Pinawa. For example, glamping provides an opportunity to provide people with a unique, high-quality experience in this unique region without hotels. Pinawa is on the way to the Whiteshell Provincial Park and the town's unique history, the roads are already built and properly maintained. Uniqueness and natural, unspoiled beauty are a powerful attraction to visitors to have a relationship with nature.

Pinawa has a very distinctive population of scientists with human, social and cultural capitals. Pinawa has the highest number of doctorates per capita in Manitoba; that cannot be replicated. This made Pinawa “The Little Town that Could”, with high levels of human capital,. Pinawa's social capitals provided the bridging and bonding networks and linkages to design public spaces, fundraise and control tourism. These capitals that create positive change were a source of community pride and ownership, according to the interviews. Pinawa has the strong bonding capital of close-knit communities where people know their neighbours and want their home in paradise to stay close-knit and safe. The challenge for Pinawa — and potentially for

other rural communities -- is to mobilize local social capital toward a common goal. For Pinawa that common goal is to keep its high income base, culture and pristine environment, rather than become a beach town. People did not want Pinawa to drastically change Pinawa's paradise as community members value nature and tranquility.

What makes Pinawa unique is the combination of nature, people, culture and place. The natural, social and human assets are attractive to visitors and future residents of Pinawa. These aspects are the key ingredients to local knowledge and local process in the CED strategy, at this time of the GBF. These different types of capitals in the sustainable livelihood framework and place-based economic model (OECD, 2025) are well developed in Pinawa to help with the CED strategy for tourism

6.2 Community Economic Development strategies

Tourism in the Pinawa region should actively give back to the community and its environment, striving for regenerative tourism (Bellato & Pollock, 2022). The CED strategy should include regenerative infrastructure, design and CED strategies (Bellato & Pollock, 2022), that go beyond sustainable development approaches. Sustainable development has been criticized for not working within planetary boundaries, maintaining the status quo, and consider the socioecological aspects, which are key to CED.

Regenerative tourism approaches offer tools to bring this about in Pinawa. Some interviewees discussed attracting nature-loving tourists, rather than adventure tourists. Some discussed engaging tourists and tourist in environmental education or engagement, including their turtle egg protection program. Regenerative tourism approaches would require further assessment of tourists' impacts and sustainable livelihood assets at Pinawa to improve the environment and community well-being. The determination of the what, how, and why of the tourism CED should be decided by a community process. This community process should build capacity and leadership to follow through to meet the needs of the community and protect the environment

(Bellato & Pollock, 2025).

Planning CED is about building communities' capacities and assets to ensure their sustainable wellbeing over time. Thus, CED takes a different direction from traditional economic development, which is focused on growing economic activity without consideration of the community and environment. CED is about endogenous community forces working together to achieve well-being, regenerative development and revenue. CED operates locally, not on the side of the market nor of the individual, but at the level of the community and its network of relationships.

The point where the elements of CED and regenerative tourism meet in policy is in place-based economic policies. For regenerative and inclusive development, improving environmental management and sharing tourism benefits are necessary. This requires building capacity of an inclusive workforce and regenerative tourism with consideration of climate action and meeting GBF goals. Buying or investing in unique local products offers a place-based experience. Uniqueness is a crucial component of value and pricing, generating revenue for local people without the need to produce large volumes.

Tourism or any economic strategy should not affect the current peaceful, quiet, and contemplative atmosphere of Pinawa. Hence, any infrastructure proposal must have green design features that enhance nature and access in line with the lifestyle for active living/retirement and biodiversity that Pinawa already promotes. The tourism CED plan for its success must be inclusive, green and maximize benefits for local residents. The best practices for destination tourism recommend creating and implementing a Public Use Plan (PUP) (Stange et al., n.d.), using local information to develop a unique design. Locals can input their knowledge regarding limits on the volume of traffic to protect sensitive areas, fees, rules to control parties, and visitor interpretive tools and sites for the tourist strategy. The Pinawa model, whether cooperative or a collective ownership system, allows stakeholders to own shares of the tourism strategy.

The challenge is finding funding to build on these assets, with spaces for community input and community leadership to realize CED. The tourist infrastructure would benefit from the Pinawa model for investment and management to maximize community benefit, leadership and control. Stange et al. (n.d.) recommend having a triple bottom line with returns on investment on economic, social, and environment assets. This approach seems akin to that used in the Pinawa Model (Rummery & Iverson, 2015).

The Pinawa model for senior housing, developed by Rummery and Iverson (2015), offers a community investment model to apply to tourism. This community investment model for social enterprise is similar to that applied for tourism in Fogo Island. The Pinawa Model combines local assets and, in some cases, external resources such as investment, donations, or lending for community benefit. The Pinawa model requires that communities understand their own combination of unique assets to develop local place-based solutions.

Tourism infrastructure that is green and culturally-appropriate is desired for Pinawa. A sustainable design considers regenerative experiences, behaviours, cultures, and systems (DeKay, 2014). The community plan for the Ironwood trail for Pinawa, for example, included benches, carved from local wood. This unique, local approach to design was planned for the trail along the river nearby to activities and food to foster local nature-loving, active culture. Residents of Pinawa developed the plan, and so are invested in its success, and frustrated that this plan for carved benches was shelved for cheaper non-local products. These residents, acting as ambassadors of the trails, are the local experts and should be considered as key in helping with not only designs but activities. This tourism infrastructure for sustainability would then offer experiences and learning from nature.

Local experts have much knowledge about biodiversity indicators, including flora and fauna. Tourists can engage with local experts in the turtle egg protection program to protect rare turtles there. The interactions with locals on their daily walks allow for informal learning and

interactions. Guides don't have to be formal experts, giving lectures, but can be people with local knowledge sharing informally (Bueddefeld & Van Winkle, 2024). People care about what they know. Tourists may be more influenced by someone's stories of their lived experiences in the area.

6.3 Final note

Pinawa's focus is on the nature . Any tourism or CED strategy has to consider the Pinawa residents' goals for their community, but also land protection under the GBF (CBD, 2021). The Pinawa model for senior housing shows Pinawa had a capitalist but effective CED approach, applicable to tourism. This CED investment model should focus on a community good, such as fitness centre or spa, that would also serve tourists. Pinawa's model employs many aspects of place-based economics and the sustainable livelihoods framework to increase Pinawa's attractiveness, while also meeting Pinawa needs and desires with the building of their already abundant assets.

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Appendix A: Ethics protocol approval notification



University
of Manitoba

Research Ethics and Compliance

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PROTOCOL APPROVAL

To: Shirley Thompson
Principal Investigator

From: Andrea Szwajcer, Chair
Research Ethics Board 2 (REB 2)

Re: Protocol # R2-2021:080 (HS25063)
Exploring tourism strategies to drive economic development of
Pinawa and build the necessary infrastructure

Effective: September 20, 2021

Expiry: September 20, 2022

Research Ethics Board 2 (REB 2) has reviewed and approved the above research.

REB 2 is constituted and operates in accordance with the current [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 \(2018\)](#).

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

- i. Approval is granted for the research and purposes described in this application only.
- ii. Any changes to this research must be approved by the Human Ethics Office (HEO) before implementation.
- iii. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be reported to the HEO immediately.
- iv. This approval is valid for one year only. A Renewal Request Form must be submitted and approved prior to the above expiry date.
- v. A Study Closure Form must be submitted to the HEO when the research is complete prior to the above expiry date, or if the research is terminated.
- vi. The University of Manitoba (UM) may request to audit your research documentation to confirm compliance with this approved protocol, and with the UM [Ethics of Research Involving Humans](#) policies and procedures.

Funded Protocols: Email a copy of this Protocol Approval, with the corresponding UM Project Number, to ResearchGrants@umanitoba.ca

Appendix B: Interview guide

Appendix 1: Interview guide

Date: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewers: _____

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed regarding regional tourism in and around Pinawa, considering tourism strategies that meet economic development goals and desires of residents. We will ask you 10 questions in total, which will take approximately half an hour. Please feel free to share your perspectives. I will now read through the consent form with you line by line, as shown on the screen . *(Note: one of the researchers will read through each line of the consent form in appendix 2)*. Please tell us if you have any questions about the consent form. If you do not have any questions, please let us know if you are willing to continue and if so - how would you your thoughts recorded by zoom recording or by note taking only. continue our conversation with the interview questions now. If you want notes only, would you please type in the chat you consent and if you want recording we will start the recording and ask again if you consent before we begin.

Interview Questions

1. What is your relationship with Pinawa (e.g., store-owner, resident, tourist, etc.)?
2. What are the three best features of Pinawa for tourism?
3. What needs to be improved for tourism in Pinawa (name 3) and the region?
4. What is special about Pinawa?
5. What do other communities have that is missing or better from Pinawa for tourism? Why?
6. What other tourist destinations in the region would you recommend? Why?
7. Would you recommend that people visit Pinawa? Why?
8. Any ideas about solutions for the River Channel float area traffic/parking? (e.g., Do you want asphalt parking area or Green parking with trees, plants, and pervious/absorbant surfaces? Why?
9. Is there anything else you would like to say about Pinawa tourism?

10. How important are diverse green spaces/ nature in tourism?

Not at all important	Of small importance	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	D/K