

# GROWING A YEAR-ROUND TRAIL NETWORK

From new trail connections and infrastructure improvements to guided events and winter planning, the Township continues to invest in outdoor recreation.

The 2026 summer season saw continued progress across the Sioux Narrows–Nestor Falls trail network. The trail crew focused on maintaining and improving existing trails, building new trail connections, hosting activities and offering programming that encouraged residents and visitors to get outside and explore our trail networks.

Alongside community events, the crew kept up with regular maintenance across our existing trail systems. This included clearing fallen trees/lobbing back regrowth, installing new trailheads and signage, clearing sightlines on the bike trails and making repairs to the bridge on Fern Valley, and Aspen.

A new connection trail was also completed this summer between Red Pine Trail and Bass Lake Park, creating another link within the community. Connecting a multi-use trail, to a multi-use space. Offering visitors more after their hikes, or encouraging those hanging out, into the trails. A new and improved Bass Lake Park will be ready to welcome visitors in the spring of 2027.

Work also began on Gathering Pines, a brand-new trail being developed in Sioux Narrows. Starting from bush, the trail crew began clearing the short loop, and started shaping the next loop, bringing you to a lookout overlooking Regina Bay on beautiful Lake of the Woods.

Summer brought even more activity to the trails, with guided hikes and native plant identification events, forest bathing sessions, youth trail stewardship workshops and many more community focused events. The success of these programs was made possible through the support and collaboration of our local schools, restaurants, volunteers, and trail professionals.

This summer staff attended the first ever Canadian Trail Summit, hosted by Trans Canada Trail in Winnipeg alongside more than 300 trail professionals, researchers and community leaders from across Canada. The summit provided a chance to exchange ideas, explore funding resources and bring new knowledge back to our local trail systems.

One of the biggest takeaways was something we see in our community every day: getting outside is good for us. Research from Trans Canada Trail estimates that physical activity along its national network contributes to approximately \$1.7 billion in healthcare savings each year, reinforcing just how valuable access to outdoor spaces can be.

Looking ahead to fall, activities include school-based guided walks and more hands-on trail-building workshops that give the community a chance to learn new skills. We also have some Halloween fun in the works.

Planning is already underway for winter and the 2027 season. This winter, we’re looking forward to offering a variety of ways to enjoy the trails, with plans for groomed opportunities for skiing, fat biking and winter walking, along with more rugged snowshoe routes for those who prefer to carve their own path.

Together, this work supports recreation, community health, tourism and economic development while helping grow Sioux Narrows–Nestor Falls as a year-round outdoor destination.



SIoux NARROWS – NESTOR FALLS

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

FALL 2026

### SPECIAL EVENTS INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY CHARTS A PATH FORWARD FOR COMMUNITY GROWTH

The Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls completed a comprehensive Special Events Infrastructure Study aimed at identifying opportunities to strengthen the community's ability to host events, support tourism, and provide enhanced gathering spaces for residents and visitors. Conducted by Urban Systems, the study examined existing facilities, engaged community stakeholders, and evaluated several potential locations for future event infrastructure. The findings confirm that while the annual Sioux Narrows Arts Festival remains a significant cultural and economic driver, there is also a broader need for improved event space that can support year-round community activities, recreation programs, fundraising events, workshops, tournaments, and cultural programming.

After reviewing five potential sites, the study identified the Sioux Narrows Community Hall as the preferred location for future investment. The Community Hall currently serves as an important community hub, hosting events organized by local groups such as the Sioux Narrows Recreation Committee, the Men's Club, Bassin' for Bucks, and the 50+ Activity Centre. Expanding the facility would build on this existing success while creating a larger, more functional venue capable of accommodating a wide range of community events throughout the year. Key improvements envisioned include approximately 4,000 square feet of new indoor event space, a covered outdoor gathering area, expanded patio space, accessible washrooms, upgraded kitchen facilities, improved internet connectivity, and flexible indoor and outdoor areas for vendors, performances, and community activities.

The proposed expansion represents a long-term investment in the community's social and economic vitality. Preliminary estimates place the cost of the expansion and associated outdoor improvements at approximately \$1.2 million. The study concludes that investing in the Community Hall would provide Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls with a modern, multi-purpose event centre that supports tourism, local businesses, arts and culture, recreation, and community development. By creating a dedicated, year-round gathering place, the Township can strengthen its capacity to host events, attract visitors, and enhance quality of life for residents for decades to come.



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# VISITOR CENTRES WELCOME THOUSANDS DURING STRONG 2026 TOURISM SEASON

Visitor activity remained strong throughout both information centres during the 2026 summer season.

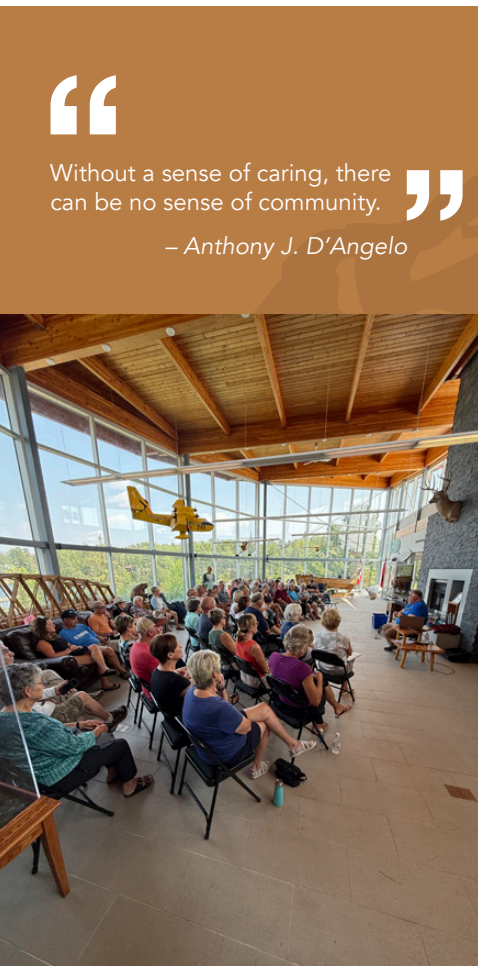
From May through August, the Northern Ontario Sportfishing Centre (NOSFC) recorded 8,778 walk-ins, up 4.6% from 2025. July and August were the busiest months, with August recording 3,491 visitors.

The NOSFC hosted more than 30 events and activities from mid-May through September, including five music concerts, workshops, Kids Fishing for Fun, educational presentations and children’s programming. Two August long weekend concerts attracted more than 600 guests in total.

From May through August, the Nestor Falls Information Centre recorded 3,163 visitor interactions, with overall traffic remaining comparable to 2025. Information inquiries increased, with more locals stopping in for maps, guides and local information.

Staff observed fewer foreign travelers and lower Boreal Trail traffic compared with 2025, while visitor services and accommodations remained close to last year’s levels. Digital resources, including QR codes, the centre’s website and new Facebook page, continue to complement in-person visitor services.

Our visitor centres continue to play an important role in connecting visitors and residents with local businesses, attractions, trails, accommodations and community events. Continued tracking of visitor numbers, visitor origins and service use will help identify tourism trends and inform future economic development and programming in our community.



“Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community.”  
– Anthony J. D’Angelo

# TIME CHANGE SURVEY SHOWS STRONG SUPPORT FOR ALIGNMENT WITH MANITOBA

Following Manitoba’s announcement that it intends to adopt permanent daylight saving time, the Township conducted a community survey to gather local feedback. As of September 29, the survey received 157 responses, with 93.6% of respondents supporting permanent daylight time and remaining aligned with Manitoba.

Respondents cited the region’s strong economic, commercial and service connections to Winnipeg and Manitoba, including travel for business, healthcare, shopping, tourism and employment. Local businesses and tourism operators also highlighted the benefits of consistent timekeeping across the provincial border for customers, suppliers and service providers.

The survey results demonstrate clear community support for maintaining time alignment with Manitoba and will help inform future discussions regarding any potential changes to time observance in northwestern Ontario.



# MOOSE N’ FIDDLE CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

This year marked the 10th annual Moose N’ Fiddle Festival in beautiful Caliper Lake Provincial Park on Aug. 21-22. There were some new additions this year, including a storybook walk on Boreal Trail, trail yoga, Spaghetti and Sundaes, a Community Care Blanket, and a Living Locket Necklace Workshop with Shannon Leigh Stack.

Ticket sales were strong in 2026 with a 57% increase in ticket sales and that momentum will look to carry into 2027 as planning is already underway. There will be a more concerted effort to draw festivalgoers into town and visit local businesses.

# FARMERS MARKET GROWTH HIGHLIGHTS EXPANDING LOCAL AND REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

2026 marked the second season of the Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls Farmers Market continued to demonstrate positive growth and its value as both an economic development initiative and community gathering place. Six markets were held from June through September, attracting an average of 175 attendees per market—a slight increase over the previous season.

Vendor participation also increased, with a combination of returning and new vendors offering fresh produce, handmade and artisan goods, and opportunities to connect with community organizations. Vendors from all over the region travelled for the market, demonstrating the market’s growing reach and its ability to bring vendors and visitors into the community.

While the third season showed encouraging growth, there are still opportunities to strengthen and improve the market. Building on feedback and lessons from this season will help guide future planning, with a continued focus on growing vendor participation, increasing the attendance, and creating an experience that encourages visitors to explore the community.

The market continues to support local and regional entrepreneurship, regional connections, community culture, and economic activity in Sioux Narrows – Nestor Falls.



# RECONCILIATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A key pillar of the Township’s Community Economic Development Plan is to partner and collaborate with neighbouring communities on shared tourism and economic development priorities (Goal 4.1). As a community located on the traditional lands of Treaty 3, Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls recognizes its responsibility to uphold the spirit and intent of the Treaty and to foster respectful, meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities. Reconciliation is an ongoing journey that includes listening, learning, working together, and creating opportunities that support shared prosperity across the region. Economic development and reconciliation are closely connected.

Strong partnerships help communities identify common priorities, improve regional services, attract investment, support local businesses, and enhance quality of life for residents. By working collaboratively, municipalities and Indigenous communities can achieve outcomes that might not be possible working independently, while building trust and strengthening long-term relationships.

The Township is proud of the collaborative work currently underway with neighbouring First Nations and regional partners. Recent initiatives include cooperation on landfill expansion planning, the development of more inclusive community signage, trail planning and programming, and ongoing discussions to identify mutual opportunities for tourism development, infrastructure investment, and economic growth. These efforts reflect a shared commitment to building stronger communities and a stronger regional economy.

As Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls looks to the future, regional collaboration will continue to play an important role in advancing economic development objectives. By working together, the Township can help create a more resilient, inclusive, and prosperous region while continuing to strengthen relationships and uphold its commitment to reconciliation.