

Date: Oct. 2/08
To: Mayor Breckenridge & Members of Tiny Council
From: Save the Beaches Inc.
Subject: Strategic Plan

We are writing regarding the Township's Strategic Plan. We would like to comment on the proposals regarding beach access. The proposed Guiding Principles of the plan discuss enhancing access to all Township owned shoreline property while protecting privately owned shoreline properties and preserving and enhancing municipally owned shoreline property.

Wording in the Strategic plan suggests that the Township would take an active roll in protecting private property rights while ignoring the rights of the public to continued traditional use of the beaches.

Tiny residents and surrounding communities have used the beaches of Tiny for generations without being restricted to certain areas of the beach. Directing residents and the public to 66 foot road allowances and so called "municipal beaches" would cause overcrowding/ghettoization in certain areas and would also be a nuisance to those whose properties abut these beach accesses areas. Words such as 'preserving and enhancing', 'community beaches', and 'access' and the exclusion of such words as "beach use" "recreational uses" or "traditional uses" are surely misleading. Misrepresentations such as these by our elected Council are one of the major reasons that beach access is such a contentious issue in our Township. It would be in the best interest of "all" Tiny residents for Council to strive to protect the traditional and historic access and use of Tiny beaches that has been a pattern for the past 100 years. Words cannot change historic facts.

We realize that ownership of beaches varies in the Township and in some cases ownership is unclear, but regardless of ownership, there has been longstanding historic traditional public recreational access and use of Township beaches dating back for generations.

We know there have been many applications made to the Province under the Boundaries Act by Tiny shoreline property owners. It is our understanding that these applications do not deal with land ownership, only with where boundaries might be established. We understand you have been advised of this by your Township lawyer. To our knowledge, none of the applicant's, including the Marion's who have erected a fence at Balm Beach have applied for 'Absolute Title', nor have any of the applicants claims of ownership to the water's edge been legally tested. It is troublesome that under those circumstances our Mayor, our Council and Township staff continually refer to the beaches of Tiny as being private and that the strategic plan makes reference to protecting private properties.

It would seem foolish for the Township to state that they favour private ownership of the beaches when it is within their mandate to protect the rights of the public and to ensure that no group of citizens is favoured over another.

We believe that this topic and other topics in the Strategic Plan deserve more consideration and that more public input is required. One public meeting held in the off season on a Friday morning when many residents are either out of the Township or at work is not adequate or fair to Township residents in view of the importance of the outcome and how it would effect the rights of every Tiny resident.

Donna Ebers
on behalf of Save the Beaches Inc.