CIVIC TRADITION & PLANNING PROCESSES:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO RESOURCE COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

by

JILL LEWIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis studies the interplay between civic tradition and planning processes through a comparative case study of two Northern Ontario resource towns, Atikokan and Elliot Lake. It assesses the degree of community-wide social capital in these two towns and examines the origin and nature of their civic traditions. It addresses these questions: once a community's civic tradition has been established, how does this tradition affect the execution of planning processes? Do planning processes have the power to affect civic tradition? It is hypothesized that the structure of planning processes employed during the communities' formative years unintentionally wove the communities' social fabrics.

Historical documents and interviews with key informants indicate that technocrats from the provincial government and private consulting firms planned Elliot Lake prior to the arrival of its citizens, while Atikokan was developed in the absence of a master plan and with little guidance from the state. Subsequently, both communities lost their major industries, re-doubled their efforts, and built new economic bases. In preparation for economic renewal, Elliot Lake employed an open, participatory planning process, while Atikokan's redevelopment took place behind closed doors.

It is concluded that the structure of formative planning processes is a symptom, rather than a cause, of social capital formation. It is the philosophies, attitudes, and values of resource towns' 'founding fathers' (often managers from the resource companies or government-appointed administrators) and pioneers, as well as the resource companies' corporate cultures, that serve as the primary breeding grounds of its social capital.

Once formed, social capital manifests itself in a community's conscious civic culture. This culture then passes on from generation to generation. A community's response to consequential disruptions in the macro-environment determines the way in which a community's civic tradition evolves. Planning processes merely reflect and reinforce a community's civic tradition; they do not fundamentally change it. Therefore, planners ought to understand the civic culture of the communities in which they work and they ought to employ planning techniques that are appropriate to a community's social, cultural, and political dynamics.

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CHAPTER 1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Research Problem & Rationale

This research investigates the relationship between a community's planning processes and its civic tradition through a comparative study of two resource-based towns which were developed during the heyday of new town planning in Canada. This study arose from my deep-seated desire to probe into the social history of my hometowns, Atikokan and Elliot Lake. [1]

What is this study's rationale and what is its relation to planning? Why did I choose to investigate the construction of social capital in my hometowns? I chose the topic because these two hinterland communities carved out of the Canadian Shield appear identical to an outside observer. But that observation couldn't be farther from the truth. Although similarities in their development histories give rise to this conclusion, an examination of their social histories leads to an entirely different finding.

Nearly 1200 kilometres of fresh water lakes and Boreal forest separate my isolated and remote hometowns. Yet despite their physical separation, to consultants parachuted into the communities, they are paternal twins. In the eyes of land-use planning and economic development consultants, both towns were developed during the 'new town planning' era. Within the span of a few short decades both had lost their single industry to competitive forces, depleting ore bodies, and rapid technological changes. Both struggled to acclimatize to the realities of the post-industrial economy foisted upon them.

But from my myopic viewpoint, as a surrogate child of the twins, I struggle to detect even the slightest resemblance between the two former mining towns. Despite their geographic, economic, and physical land-use similarities, the communities have woven disparate social fabrics. This

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[1] Both Atikokan and Elliot Lake are my hometowns. I was born and raised in Atikokan until I was 11 years old, at which time my family relocated to Elliot Lake. My formative adolescent years were spent in Elliot Lake. By the time I was ready to embark on post-secondary studies, my memories of Atikokan had faded and weaken. This began to change when my family returned to Atikokan after a decade long hiatus. I became reacquainted with Atikokan during breaks between academic semesters. Over the span of a few short years, Atikokan quietly crept back into my heart as I re-kindled social networks and built new ones. Both communities shaped my growth and development. As such, I call both places 'home'.

disparity led me to question the origins of a town's social capital and ultimately gave rise to this study.

Upon cursory observation one might conclude that the communities' different civic cultures stem from discrepancies in population, since one community is three times larger than the other, or age, since one community is twice the age of the other. These and a variety of other easily quantifiable features of community life, including wealth and average length of residency, admittedly converge to form a community's unique civic culture.[2]

But surely these socio-economic factors are not the only threads that comprise a town's social fabric. By holding a microscope to the civic cloth of my hometowns, I strive to inspect the role of planning in the formation of social capital and transmutation of civic tradition. This study reaches beyond counting the number and age of subdivisions; rather it investigates the process that led to the creation of subdivisions and its impact on a community's civic culture.

Technocrats from the provincial government and private consulting firms planned one community prior to the arrival of its citizens, while the other community was developed in the absence of a master plan and with little guidance from the state. Could the structure of planning processes deployed during the communities' formative years have unintentionally created the communities' social fabric? What relationship does planning have to the social construction of a community's civic tradition?

More importantly, for planning consultants parachuted into the communities today, what influence (if any) does a town's social fabric have upon planning processes ensued? In addition to studying a community's land-use development history, should planning consultants also investigate a community's social history? Should planners concern themselves with civics?

It is these plaguing questions that gave rise to this study, which is premised on two key assumptions supported by social capital research:

- ♦ Civics matter. Community-wide social capital increases the efficiency and effectiveness of economic, environmental and human aspects of community life (Mitchell et al, 1999).

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[2] Throughout this document, the terms civic culture and civic tradition will be used interchangeably to describe the type, level, and dimension of community-wide social capital exuded by a community over the course of time (typically spanning decades and generations).

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♦ History matters. A community's civic tradition, formed during early phases of its development, is self-reinforcing, has staying power and demonstrates "astonishing tensile strength" through time (Putnam, 1993, p. 162).

To Robert Putnam, Jan Flora, James Coleman, Cynthia Duncan and many other social capital theorists, civics matter. They believe social features of community life, lubricated by social networks and norms of trust and reciprocity, facilitate collective action. This defines civic community, which, according to Putnam (1993), is characterized by an active public-spirited citizenry, vibrant networks of civic engagement, egalitarian political relations, a social fabric of trust, reciprocity and cooperation, and many diverse volunteer associations. A community that ascribes to the aforementioned description possesses high levels of community-wide social capital, and is otherwise referred to as a "civic community".[3]

According to the research findings of these social capital heavyweights, community-wide social capital in turn contributes to the overall well-being of the community. Civic communities have been linked to economic resilience and prosperity, effective democratic institutions, and lower incidences of poverty, crime, and social problems (Woolcock, 1998; Duncan, 1999; Putnam 1993 & 2000). Theorists propound the existence of a direct relationship between social capital and a community's capacity to resist negative effects and seize opportunities (Dhesi, 2000). Quite simply, communities that exhibit high levels of social capital are more desirable than places lacking in social capital.

A myriad of studies have sung the praises of social capital's usefulness in society and many more have invented measures and indicators for tracking the ebb and flow of social capital which, according to leading social capital theorist James Coleman, invisibly manifests itself in the structure of social relations. Yet few have investigated the origins of social capital formation. This is surprising given Putnam's (1993) seminal work in North and South Italy, which found that, "civic community has deep historical roots" and "civic traditions have remarkable staying power" (p. 183 &157). Extrapolating from Putnam's findings, a community's civic culture is largely shaped during its initial development phases and has remarkable staying power despite changes to the economic, political, and social climate over time.

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[3] By the same token, a community that does not exhibit characteristics commonly held by a community with high levels of social capital is not referred to as being a "civic community". Putnam calls this type of community "un-civic".

Putnam's findings weaken the assumption, often implicit in the works of social capital theorists, that the civic dynamic of a long-standing community is easily malleable. According to Putnam, purposeful construction of social capital, in addition to the establishment of effective institutions, is confounded by the social context and civic history of a community. Nurturing the development of civic community after a civic tradition has been established isn't impossible, but neither is it easy. Putnam (1993) maintains that achieving such a feat requires generations of time and patience.

Despite this work, social capital theorists have given surprisingly little credence to the concept of civic tradition. Perhaps this is because scholars do not share Putnam's belief in the stagnant nature of a community's social capital once it has been formed, thus helping to explain why few have explored the formation of social capital.

Scholars offer other explanations for this literature gap. Of the works that do probe into the causes of social capital formation, little consensus on the sources of social capital has been achieved (Dhesi, 2000). Further confounding efforts to delineate the origins and processes of social capital's formation is theorists' struggle to distinguish social capital's sources from its benefits (Mitchell et al, 1999). Finally, inquiry into the formation of social capital is lacking because scholars, in their efforts to strengthen the credibility of the concept in relation to its counterparts of financial and human capital, have dedicated the lion's share of their energy to the study of social capital's benefits. As the concept continues to gain currency in political economy circles, perhaps the research focus will shift away from proving social capital's invaluable contribution to the market and the state towards investigating the forces that give rise to it.

Even Putnam, in his book <u>Democracy Works</u>, does not thoroughly address how North and South Italy first embarked on divergent paths of civic community. Putnam pinpoints the rise of communal republics in the North during the 11th century as the breeding grounds for strong civic community, but the conditions that gave rise to the North's city-state communes weren't identified. Why wasn't communal autonomy in the North stamped out by bureaucratized, centralized, and autocratic governance mechanisms, which dominated the South? Why didn't Southerners reject feudalism and embrace communal republicanism? Such plaguing questions are worthy of further inquiry and investigation.

It is this unquenchable desire to better understand how civic community is formed that prompted me to undertake this comparative study of two towns carved out of Canada's resource frontier in the mid 20th century.

1.2   Research Questions

This study probes into the social history of two Northern Ontario resource towns developed during the era of new town planning. At its heart, this research investigates the formation of a community's social capital and the staying power of that civic tradition through time. Conducted through the lens of planning theory, this study seeks to explore the interplay (if any) between a community's civic tradition and its planning processes. Specifically, this study strives to address the following questions:

- ◆ To what degree do Atikokan and Elliot Lake exhibit the characteristics of a "civic community" (a community with high levels of community-wide social capital)?
- ◆ What factors contribute to the formation of a resource town's social capital? Specifically, does a resource town's formative planning process impact the construction of its social capital?
- ◆ Once a community's civic tradition has been established, how does it affect the execution of planning processes?
- ◆ Does a community's civic tradition transform and mutate over time? What causes this mutation?

Embedded in this investigation of the relationship between civic tradition and planning processes is also an appraisal of the level of community-wide social capital in the two towns. Drawing upon established indicators of social capital, I developed questions pertaining to the existence of effective social networks, the ability to mobilize resources, and the tolerance of differing ideas and opinions, to assist with the assessment of social capital.

1.3   Research Approach

My belief in the value of local knowledge led to the selection of Northern Ontario as the site of inquiry for this study. As a former resident of the study communities, I drew upon my insight and intimate knowledge of the communities' civic dynamics to assist me with the study's design. This knowledge served as the foundation of my research. In an attempt to conform to the 'rigorous' standards of qualitative research, I used the aforementioned indicators to assess the presence of community-wide social capital in my two towns of study.

Although Putnam's study of Italy served as the impetus for this research, one does not need to travel beyond their own backyard to investigate the foundations of civic community. Places of all sizes, ages, and ethnicities are characterized by their unique civic culture. It is inhabitants of these spaces who intuitively understand their culture better than any outside researcher who waltzes into the community armed with a carefully calibrated questionnaire espousing the latest in quantitative measures and indicators. For this reason I chose to study my hometowns in an attempt to formally dissect and examine my intuitive knowledge of the communities' civic dynamics. I asked 32 fellow residents to do the same.

This case study can be characterized as a pursuit of knowledge driven by a yearning to better understand the root causes of the disparate civic dynamics of two specific towns. Studied through the contextual lens of two resource towns on Canada's northern frontier, this comparative research is designed to offer general insight into the role planning processes play in the formation and reconfiguration of civic tradition and vice versa. It is the tale of two towns, rife with differing economic, political and social contextual features. At the core of this research lies a primary difference between the two communities of study - the structure of the towns' formative planning processes.

This is the story of Atikokan, where citizens led the community's formative planning process, and Elliot Lake, where technocrats, following a master plan, drove the process. Elliot Lake, located 30 kilometres north of Lake Huron midway between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury, was hailed as the 'suburbia of the north'. Led by the provincial government in partnership with mining companies and numerous consultants, Elliot Lake was comprehensively master planned within the span of a few

months during the mid-1950s. Citizens weren't engaged in the process because the community didn't exist at the time the plan was drafted.

Atikokan, unlike Elliot Lake, had humble beginnings which date back to the turn of the 20th century when it was formed as an isolated divisional point along the railway. Located 200 kilometres west of Lake Superior near the southern boundary of the United States, Atikokan grew from 300 to 3000 over the course of a decade following the discovery of iron ore in the 1940s. There was no master plan for Atikokan. Influenced by nascent government planning policies, mine managers, civic organizations and government-appointed civic leaders worked together to build a mining town that bore some semblance to a permanent, modern community.

Might a community's formative planning process be at the root cause of civic mores? Is there a direct correlation between Atikokan's locally controlled planning process and its long-standing tradition of working together for community betterment? Can the proliferation of hierarchical networks in Elliot Lake be traced back to the structure of its formative planning process? Or is the purported relationship between planning and civics perhaps a spurious one? This case study, propped up by qualitative research, was designed to answer these questions.

Relying on the social networks of my family and friends, 33 key informants were purposefully hand-selected. Of the 33 participants, 14 reside in Atikokan, 18 in Elliot Lake, and 1 does not live in either of the two towns.[4] The participants were selected for their knowledge of the community's development history, involvement in civic activities, and/or participation in the community's economic renewal process. Each informant responded to a standardized schedule of open-ended, qualitative questions, with the interviews lasting 1 to 2 hours in length.

Rather than employing the quantitative and abstruse methods of assessing social capital employed by the majority of social capital researchers, a more straightforward, qualitative research approach was employed. Participants were asked to reflect on civic involvement and group interaction within the community and the community's ability to work together. They were encouraged to analyze the power dynamics alive in their community and to ponder the forces that led to the formation of their

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[4] This non-resident, who is a university professor, was selected for his intimate knowledge of Elliot Lake's economic redevelopment process.

community's civic culture. Participants were also asked to identify linkages (if any) between planning processes and the community's ability to resolve collective action problems.

In addition to field research, secondary source materials, including local history books, archived newspaper clippings and planning documents, were also used to deepen the understanding of the two community's land-use, economic, and social histories.

1.4 Research Limitations

No research is unscathed by bias. And this study is no exception. My intimate knowledge of and participation in the communities' social networks offers little protection from criticism of the study's objectivity, credibility and validity.

Neither my key informants nor I purport to be objective. This study is no different from social capital in that it is built on trust and mutual respect. Just as my participants trust that their identity will be protected, I trust that they have divulged their true thoughts and feelings.

The study's credibility has little defence. If a different person were to administer the same study would the findings be replicated? Hopefully. But a definitive answer cannot be ascertained unless and until the study's credibility is tested. Unfortunately such a test would be inherently flawed, as no two studies are identical. However, the study's credibility was strengthened by the inclusion of two individuals who, like myself, resided in both communities. Their thoughts echoed and reaffirmed my feelings, thereby helping to strengthen the study's credibility.

Are the study's findings valid? To what degree can the findings be generalized to other settings similar to the one in which the study occurred? The validity of the research is its greatest limitation. Before the findings of this study can be defended with confidence and readily generalized, more Canadian resource towns built during the era of new town planning must be studied. To extrapolate and apply findings from two communities to the hundreds of single-industry towns that dominated Canada' resource frontier during the mid 20th century would be foolish. This research serves as a starting point for further inquiry into the forces that commingle to form the foundation of a community's civic tradition.

Finally, this study is tainted by a selection bias as only current residents of the two communities were interviewed. By and large, the study's key informants were individuals who had opted to remain in their community despite formidable economic conditions, thus indicating their love of and attachment to their community. This is contrasted with the hundreds of families who chose to leave the communities for a variety of economic and social reasons. The opinions of those people were not sought. As a result, the research participants might have been less likely to identify and dwell on negative aspects of civic life than former residents. Despite this bias, key informants in both towns addressed positive as well as negative aspects of community life.

1.5   Organization of the Study

This study is organized as follows. Chapter 2 defines key terms, explores theories pertaining to the origins of social capital, and examines the converging bodies of social capital and planning literature. Chapter 3 locates my analysis of the origins, nature, and behaviour of social capital in two Canadian resource communities, Atikokan and Elliot Lake. It retraces the communities' social, economic and political past. Chapter 4 combines this secondary source information with thoughts, feelings and opinions of 32 residents and analyses this information through the lens of social capital. Jan Flora's entrepreneurial social infrastructure model frames the assessment of community-level social capital in my places of study. After completing this evaluation of the nature and origins of social capital, Chapter 5 elaborates on the key findings of the research and suggests actions planning theorists and planners ought to consider taking to improve planning in resource communities. It also offers some points of departure for further research.

CHAPTER 2: SOCIAL CAPITAL & PLANNING PROCESSES

This chapter begins by locating the discussion of social capital at the community level with an exploration of the terms "community" and "community-wide social capital". It then investigates the heated debate surrounding the origins of social capital. A handful of social capital theorists even suggest that a causal link between planning processes and social capital construction exists. Critics of new town planning in Canadian resource communities have also examined planning's impact on citizen participation and other dimensions of social capital. Using different language to describe what is often the same phenomenon, planning theorists and social capital theorists have separately explored the interplay between formative planning processes and social capital.

2.1   Locating Social Capital in the Context of Community

Community is a nebulous term, as is social capital. Both terms mean many things to many people (Harriss & de Renzio, 1997) and nestle themselves in many types, forms, and dimensions (Woolcock, 1998). To one person community means a geographically defined area, while to another community is an aspatial expression of "affect-laden relations among individuals" (Etzioni, 1996, p. 1). As a result of the frequent and undefined use of the word "community", it has become an easy target for criticism. Leonie Sandercock scolds planners for romanticizing the term "the community", which implicitly assumes that only one community exists (1998).

For the purposes of this research, a place-based definition of community, which incorporates relational values, is utilized. "Community" here refers to the assemblage of humans living together in a shared physical environment who are united by norms of behaviour, which arise from a shared history and common tradition (Parker, 1963; Etzioni, 1996).[5]

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[5] This definition is supported by my research findings. I discovered that Elliot Lakers feel that their sense of community aligns with its municipal boundaries (369 square miles), whereas Atikokanites believe that their community is not hemmed in by political bounds (144 square miles). Numerous residents own lakefront property outside of Atikokan's municipal bounds and, as one resident said, "they are part of the community too because they are valuable. They use the facilities in town and they contribute ideas." Moreover, three of my fourteen key informants, at one time, lived outside of Atikokan's political bounds while continuing to play an active role in civic affairs within the municipality. This example shows that defining community by political boundaries alone is inadequate for this study. Social relationships also play a vital role in the participants' definition of community. In addition to sharing a physical environment, residents of these isolated, small towns also share a loose set values and norms of behaviour, which stems from a shared history.

Creating an all-encompassing definition of "social capital" has proven to be a greater challenge than accurately identifying the term "community" along the territorial-relational spectrum. Depending on the scale of study, scholars have deemed social capital to be a resource available to individuals, families, neighbourhoods, organizations, towns, cities, regions and nation states. Generally social capital theorists, after completing extensive and numerous empirical studies, have reached the conclusion that at each level of study the characteristics of social capital - trust, norms of reciprocity, and social networks – manifest themselves differently. For example, Potapchuk & Crocker (1997, p. 133) say, "social capital at the level of the whole community...has a different character and operates in different ways than social capital on the block". Academics who study community-wide social capital are quick to point out that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts: "community-level action is not simply the aggregation of individual or organizational actions within the community" (Flora, 1998, p. 481).

This thesis is a study of community-wide social capital. Although individuals and collective actors might use social capital as a resource to satisfy their self-interests and achieve goals that could not be attained in its absence (Flora, 1998; Mayer, 2003), this use of social capital is not the focus of this study. Discussions of the general theoretical contributions of two of social capital's most prominent theorists, James Coleman and Pierre Bourdieu, will be subordinated to discussions of the contributions of Robert Putnam, Jan Flora, and Michael Woolcock who focus on the notion of the 'community field'. This notion holds that social capital embeds itself within the social structure of an entire community. Therefore, if community-wide social capital is strong, then the community (as previously defined) comprises an "active public-spirited citizenry" (Putnam, 1993, p. 15) characterized by a social fabric of trust, reciprocity, cooperation, and egalitarian relationships that "increases the welfare of the community" (Glaeser, 2001, p. 35) and facilitates cooperation for mutual benefit (Woolcock, 1998). In Putnam's words (1993), a place with strong community-wide social capital can be referred to as a "civic community".

For the purposes of this study, civic community is identified by the possession of both intra-community ties which encompass a healthy balance of dense networks among like-minded individuals as well as intersectoral networks that bring together parties with different interests and backgrounds, and inter-community ties which involve linkages between communities and interests external to them. This important distinction between intra and inter community ties arose from the work of Alejandro Portes who criticized scholars for assuming social capital is an unalloyed public

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good at any level and in any form. One of Portes' chief concerns with social capital's downside is its exclusionary effect. The flipside of forming dense networks of social relations, upheld by norms of reciprocity and trust among like-minded individuals who share similar interests defined by proximity of physical, economic, and/or social space, is social exclusion (Mitchell et al, 1999). An over-predominance of these types of networks (frequently referred to as bonding social capital) typically leads to a battle of 'us versus them' across spatial, ethnic, and socio-economic divides.

Perhaps galvanized by Portes' criticisms levelled at the scholarship, subsequent researchers have become more vigilant about distinguishing between varying performance outcomes arising from different levels, forms and dimensions of social capital. Today, social capital researchers openly accept that not all forms of social capital are productive or useful; neither do all forms of social capital contribute to positive community development. Great strides have been taken towards identifying and categorizing types of social capital.

According to various social capital scholars, "community-wide social capital" must possess both strong and weak ties (Granovetter, 1973); horizontal and vertical networks (Flora, 1998)[6]; integration (intra-community ties) and linkage (extra-community ties) (Woolcock, 1998); and bonding and bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000). Bonding social capital and strong ties typically reside in relationships among family members, close friends, neighbours, and members of the same civic associations. Such networks facilitate social cohesion, in-group loyalty, and solidarity.

Every place-based community is home to bonding social capital of some form or another. However, bonding networks do not promote strong community-wide social capital. Bonding social capital mobilizes and encourages civic engagement, but rarely promotes social change (Warner, 1999; Narayan & Pritchett, 1999). Strong ties nurture intra-group cohesion, while simultaneously leading to overall fragmentation (Granovetter, 1973). To counter the shortcomings of an over-predominance of bonding social capital, bridging ties are also required.

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[6] In the literature, horizontal networks describe relationships between individuals of "equivalent status and power" (Putnam, 1993, p. 173). However, the terminology used to describe networks that bring actors from different socio-economic locations together differs from researcher to researcher. Flora uses the terms 'vertical' and 'hierarchical' interchangeably to describe such networks. Other researchers (Putnam, 1993; Warner, 2001) have used the terms 'vertical networks' and 'hierarchical ties' indiscriminately to describe patron-client relations, where trust and cooperation are not easily sustained. For the purposes of this thesis, vertical integration is viewed as a productive, active agent in civic communities, whereas hierarchical networks link "unequal agents in asymmetric relations of hierarchy and dependence" (Putnam, 1993, p. 173). The presence of hierarchical networks hinders the formation of civic community.

The prevalence of bridging ties is a hallmark of civic community. Bridging ties are seen as those that connect socially dissimilar individuals and facilitate the exchange of information, resources and services between different social and economic groups (Wellman, 1992; Warner, 1999; Narayan & Pritchett, 1999). These social networks breed norms of reciprocity and trust in communities. Drawing upon Granovetter's findings, Putnam says bridging social capital is crucial for "getting ahead" (Granovetter, 1998 qtd in Putnam, 2000, p. 23).

In summary, for the purposes of this research, "community" refers to the assemblage of individuals who share a physical environment and are united by a shared history. Both Elliot Lake and Atikokan adhere to this definition. In this thesis, a community that possesses high levels of community-wide social capital, otherwise referred to as "civic community", is defined as an active, public-spirited citizenry characterized by a social fabric of trust, reciprocity, cooperation and egalitarian relations where cooperation across social cleavages is facilitated by the presence of bridging ties.

2.2   Locating the Origins of Social Capital

While all social capital researchers have mulled over the definition of social capital, few have researched its causes. As Margit Mayer lamented in her March 2003 article in the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research regarding local government's role in the production of civil society, "an analysis of such prerequisites and conditions of 'social capital' usually remains outside of the social capital perspective" (p. 123). Most scholars have focused on studying the effects of social capital rather than its causes. No consensus has been reached among the few scholars who have investigated social capital's origins to date.

One of Putnam's highly criticized conclusions from his study of institutional performance and its relation to civic tradition in Italy was his suggestion that social capital arises from the quality of associational life. He is criticized for not probing deeper into the economic, political and environmental conditions that enabled volunteer associations to flourish in Northern Italy and wither in the South. Rather than attempting to provide a complete explanation of the factors that nourish vibrant volunteer associations, Putnam points to the history books of the Dark Ages for the answers. But he stops short of cracking open the books.

Ian Falk & Sue Kilpatrick (2000), in their probe to uncover the causes of social capital, echo Putnam's findings that the quality and quantity of social interactions are essential to the construction of social capital. They conclude that the provision of sufficient opportunities for social interaction is the key to social capital formation. Following in the footsteps of their predecessor, Falk & Kilpatrick stop short of investigating the ideal conditions that provide opportunities for social interaction. They suggest further research is needed.

Mildred Warner responds to Falk & Kilpatrick's call for a deeper pursuit of social capital's origins by identifying two key factors in the formation of social capital: autonomy and linkage. Warner (1999) believes that community-wide social capital is derived from the community members' "power to effectively express a position or carry out a program" and their linkages within and beyond the community, which facilitates the exchange of information and resources (p. 377). According to Warner, a community's autonomy and linkage is a function of the nature, structure and design of government intervention in addition to civic tradition.

Sidney Tarrow, John Harriss, Paolo de Renzio, Jonathan Fox, John Booth, Patricia Richard and others agree with Warner. These scholars have also focused their attention on the role of government intervention in the formation of community-wide social capital. Tarrow (1996) probes deeper into the construction of Italy's regional civic traditions by contending that the predominance of 'un-civic' communities in south stemmed from "a public culture shaped by more than a century of political and administrative dependency" (p. 395). State building, state strategy, political context, and government intermediaries have been pinpointed as the causes of social capital formation. These aforementioned theorists believe that the nature and structure of the political environment, which "governs who plays, the rules of the game, and acceptable outcomes" (Foley & Edwards, 1996, p. 47 qtd. in Booth & Richard, 1998), determines the degree of autonomy and linkage afforded to a community. This, in turn, creates or stifles opportunities for social interaction and civic engagement – the foundations of social capital.

Researchers have argued both for and against state intervention as a means of building social capital. At one end of the spectrum, some theorists (e.g. Amitai Etizoni, Francis Fukuyama, Elinor Ostrom), believe the state can restrict and destroy social capital, while at the other end of the spectrum, theorists (e.g. Mildred Warner, Michael Woolcock) think that the state can play an important constructive role in the formation of social capital. Such divergent opinions among social capital

theorists leaves some onlookers questioning the concept's credibility. Ben Fine (1999), for example, accuses researchers of being analytically selective, using social capital to justify development agendas for the world's most powerful political economies and non-governmental organizations. Fine is supported by Harriss & de Renzio (1997) who speculate that social capital means many things to many people "perhaps because it … reflects the fact that it is an idea which serves as a convenient peg for different agendas" (p.921).

Another active debate in the scholarship of social capital deals with whether or not social capital can be purposefully built. Some scholars (e.g. William Potapchuk & Jarle Crocker) think social capital can be deliberately constructed through development interventions by the state or third sector organizations (NGOs, non-profits, volunteer associations) While these theorists believe that social capital's development can be calibrated and controlled through the deployment of carefully crafted interventionist processes and programs, others doubt this is possible. Theorists, such as Cynthia Duncan, believe that social capital is embedded in and results from systemic social, economic, and political cultures. Duncan, along side Putnam (1993), Fukuyama (1995), and Dhesi (2000), might be called "historical determinists" because of their belief in the lasting legacy of a community's social fabric woven at the outset of community formation. According to these theorists, social capital is deeply ingrained in centuries of history and culture (Woolcock, 1998), thereby restricting it from being purposefully manipulated through policies.

Despite his deterministic tendencies, Francis Fukuyama (1995) admits that the "accumulation of social capital is complicated" (p. 11), believing social capital stems from a mysterious cultural process; thus making it problematic to unravel, dissect, and pinpoint the origins of social capital. Ronald Labonte (1999) echoes this sentiment as he envisions the construction of social capital as "a process, not a thing" (p. 432). There is no destination, only a journey.

A universal 'formula' for social capital formation has not yet been developed; nor is one likely to be developed. Despite propounding the virtues of social capital construction, Autar Dhesi (2000) qualifies his assertion by stating that social capital can only be augmented to a certain "threshold level" (p. 202), one that is unique to each community, while Mildred Warner (1999) confesses that social capital construction is not viable in all communities. Although social capital theorists do not have a consensus on the causes of social capital, nearly all of them agree that social capital is much easier to unintentionally destroy than it is to deliberately create. For example, interventionist

programs and strategies designed to assist with a community's economic, land-use, or political development may place excessive demands on a community's social networks causing them to become overwhelmed to the point that "the social system may break down" (Dhesi, 2000, p. 202). Coleman (1988) posits that, "most forms of social capital are created or destroyed as a by-product of other activities" (p. 118 qtd. in Flora, 1998, p. 485).

2.3 Locating Planning within Social Capital Literature

The debate on social capital formation raises questions about the role community planning processes can play in the formation and construction (destruction) of social capital. Here I refer to planning as a mechanism for controlling development that is employed by the state at various levels. There is a growing body of literature that challenges Putnam's assertion that social capital is the prime determinant and root cause of effective democratic governance. According to Tarrow (1996) and Harriss and de Renzio (1997), this relationship between civic capacity and governance is not unidirectional; rather it is bi-directional and self-reinforcing. They argue that civic community stems from progressive politics (Tarrow, 1996) and that state institutions influence the features of social organizations (Harriss & de Renzio, 1997). Other researchers have also investigated the role of the state in the process of community formation and its impact on the creation of social capital.

However, there is common ground among social capital theorists who possess disparate views on the role of the state in building up or drawing down social capital. Aside from the question as to whether state intervention is beneficial or not, generally, researchers accept the inevitability of a relationship between the state and civil actors. They focus on exploring means of mediating a successful relationship between the state and civic society through the state's regulatory framework, organizational capacity, interaction with and responsiveness to community members. By and large, social capital scholars agree on the kind of climate needed for community-wide social capital to form and flourish. "The challenge of governance at [the community] level is to provide structures and processes that can coalesce naturally occurring social interactions into social capital that can be used or invested in other situations" (Potapchuk & Crocker, 1997, p. 133).

The difference lies between those who favour a "controller state" versus a "facilitator state" as Rydin & Pennington (2000) put it. David Brown, Darcy Ashman, Elinor Ostrom, Yvonne Rydin, Mark Pennington, Mildred Warner, John Harriss, Paolo de Renzio, and others espouse the virtues of

interventionist strategies that promote and encourage local decision-making[7]. They agree that participatory, community-based interventionist strategies, as opposed to formal, hierarchical government intervention, strengthen a community's autonomy and linkage which are two key ingredients in social capital construction (Warner, 1999). This sentiment is supported by Harriss & de Renzio (1997) who believe a "benevolent" state provides space for autonomous activity among civic actors while a "hostile" state has little tolerance for civic activity and decentralized decision making power. Therefore, depending on the nature of state intervention - benevolent or hostile – civic community will thrive or wither. "To effectively build social capital, local government must share autonomy with citizens, shifting its emphasis from controller, regulator and provider to new roles as catalyst, convener, and facilitator (Warner, 2001, p. 189).

Elinor Ostrom (1990) agrees with Warner as she also calls for considerable local autonomy within the confines of a "supportive framework" whereby the state provides "specialized information, arenas of conflict resolution, and the capacity to enforce institutional rules" (qtd. in Rydin & Pennington, 2000, p. 9). In Ostrom's book <u>Governing the Commons</u> she explains how certain interventionist approaches can build civic community. Where citizens are required to resolve their own collective action problems, bonds of mutual trust and respect are forged among community members through the process of community participation. However, when external parties intervene to resolve local collective action problems there is "little incentive to develop cooperative social relationships at the local scale" (Ostrom, 1990 qtd. in Rydin & Pennington, 2000, p. 9).

However, there are only a handful of articles that directly address planning's role in the construction (destruction) of social capital. One such article was written by Potapchuk & Crocker (1999). In agreement with Warner (2001), Potapchuk & Crocker call for government intermediaries, such as planners, to view community members as partners and producers, not clients. According to Warner, the most effective means of forming and enhancing community-wide social capital is through a facilitative, participatory structure. Potapchuk & Crocker (1997) reinforce this thought by calling for planners to pay special attention to designing processes, programs and policies that will produce social capital as a by-product. This can be achieved by engaging citizens in the decision-making

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[7] Other researchers, namely Jonathan Fox, John Booth, and Patricia Richard, have investigated the ideal conditions required to form social capital under authoritarian regimes. Their findings suggest that grassroots participation and decision-making is necessary but not sufficient to produce strong community-wide social capital; interaction among state reformists and external actors is also required (Fox 1996). Since this study takes place in Canada, research involving repressive regimes is of little relevance. As such, this literature review is delimited by the study of social capital in Western democracies.

process, by treating community members as full partners in the process of governance, and by developing the citizenry's capacity to resolve their own problems. Ultimately, Potapchuk & Crocker (1997) encourage government intermediaries to utilize a community-building approach instead of operating from a paradigm of "rational planning" whereby planners are encouraged to "solve [a] problem without listening to members of the community [or without helping] them to identify their own mutual interests and priorities...(p. 137). The employment of such a process is believed to unintentionally stifle the formation of community-wide social capital.

Cynthia Duncan, Margit Mayer, and Mildred Warner temper Potapchuk & Crocker's assertion by arguing that civic norms also emerge from a certain political economy (Duncan, 1999) and are influenced by changes to the political-economic context (Mayer, 2003). Despite believing that social capital arises from civic traditions of grassroots decision-making and cooperation, both Warner and Duncan also identify the role that "deeper structural issues" (Warner, 2001, p. 189) play in the creation of community conditions that either hinder or promote social capital formation. Mayer criticizes social capital theorists for paying too much attention to the state's role in social capital formation, while virtually ignoring the political-economic context in which social capital is embedded. Social capitalists have paid too little attention to the influence of the welfare state, the labour market and market forces on the level of social capital (Mayer, 2003).

2.4   Locating Social Capital within Planning Literature

Both planning theorists and social capital scholars are intrigued by government intermediaries' effects on community. However, the outcomes studied and the language used, mask the two disciplines' similarities. One thread overtly connects planning to social capital theory - some social capital researchers (e.g. Putnam, Mitchell et al) credit Jane Jacobs for being the first to identify social capital in its contemporary guise.[8] The following discussion explores planning's contribution to the growing body of research on social capital formation through the lens of new town planning theory and critique.

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[8] In <u>The Death & Life of Great American Cities</u>, Jacobs (1960) makes the following assertion: "...underlying any float of population must be a continuity of people who have forged neighbourhood networks. These networks are a city's irreplaceable social capital. Whenever the capital is lost, from whatever cause, the income from it disappears, never to return until and unless new capital is slowly chancily accumulated." (p. 138).

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During the mid-20th century in Canada, the increasing predominance of highly capitalized resource conglomerates and the growing need to attract a stable, skilled workforce led to the decline of temporary "sleep camps" and the rise of permanent, planned communities (Parker, 1963). At one time Canada was home to 145 resource towns, 64 of which were developed in the years following the conclusion of World War II (Wichern, 1971). These new towns, developed in the 1940s and 1950s, benefited from comprehensive planning regimes characterized by extensive government involvement.

The new town movement, heavily influenced by Ebenezer Howard's Garden City concept, was a "moral and social crusade" to restructure urban form to achieve more "perfect harmony among nature, technology, and economic and social classes" (Hanson, 1978, p. 19). New town planners strove to shape not only the physical environment but also the social fabric of emerging resource towns. "Provincial governments and local planners were committed to changing the layout and internal design of towns in order to improve social relations and to create a sense of permanence" (Canadian Employment & Immigration Advisory Council, 1987, p. 36).

According to new town planners, urban form could be purposefully designed to facilitate social interactions and foster a sense of belonging. This sentiment is evidenced in James Rouse's (1978) statement that, "the well-planned community produces a quality of life and community that is impossible through random, scattered subdivision development" (p. 57). Plans created during the heyday of new town planning were designed to encourage family-oriented activities and to increase the frequency of informal meetings (Burby & Weiss, 1976) as a means of fostering community.

Building a better community was the goal, and implementing a comprehensive, master plan was the means to achieve it. In most cases, planners, external to the community, created and implemented a master plan, which has been described as an "authoritative text to guide development" (Sandercock, 1998, p. 27). The plan was a "product", arising from public-private sector collaboration, to be consumed by future residents. (Burby & Weiss, 1976, p. 136). "It is an accepted fact that during the construction phase the decisions regarding the town will be made elsewhere" (Glick & Glick, 1981, p. 18). This reliance on external decision-makers is inevitable when constructing a new town from scratch within the span of months. Typically, when "instant" towns are being planned, there are no residents to consult.

During the mid-20th century, company towns gave way to open towns[9]. The burden of municipal administration and service provision was no longer entirely born by the company. Although provincial governments encouraged a more open environment by allowing market forces to dictate development and by encouraging the formation of elected local governments, generally the economic and political life of the towns continued to be dominated by resource extraction companies (Robinson, 1963). In the face of this unintended and undesired outcome, many new town planners came to the realization that their control over urban form did not lead to social, political, and economic processes unfolding as intended.

Studies performed by planning scholars during the 1960s and 1970s identify this reality. Decades before social capital grew to become a household name among social scientists, planning scholars were investigating planning's impact on the features of civic community (referred to at that time as 'creating community'). Quality of life, resident satisfaction, health & well-being, and citizen participation within new towns across Canada's north was extensively evaluated to determine if comprehensive planning and good design strengthens social relations. The conclusion was that the master planning did not achieve its goals (Murrell, 1978).[10]

Glick & Glick (1981) blamed the problems of new towns on the "lack of process strategy" (p. 18). They blamed a variety of behavioural disorders observed in one particular resource town on the community's unfilled needs of "autonomy, esteem and self-actualization" (p. 69). Critics of new town planning pointed their fingers at the process and pace of development, which generally precluded residents' involvement in the creation of their community. They believed that citizen participation in a community's formative planning process was essential to the creation of participatory relationships. These processes were deemed to be "the key to improving the quality of life" (Aleshire, 1970, p. 392).

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[9] In its strictest definition, Lash (1958) describes a company town as being almost entirely controlled by the resource-exploiting corporation that led to the town's creation. In this case, the company owns all the land, all the houses, and may require workers to buy at company stores. In these communities, there is no democratic local government. "Open towns" are generally a kinder, gentler version of company towns. In these towns, the invisible hand of supply and demand is supposed to control development, while a democratic local government is supposed to govern. The company may own a portion of the community's housing stock, but private buildings and businesses are permitted and encouraged (Lash, 1958).

[10] For the purpose of this study, criticisms levelled at the process of master planning, as opposed to the substantives of design, is the focus of discussion. New town planners have faced significant criticism for failing to modify design principles, created in the South, to the North (to accommodate for its harsh climate and isolation). They have also been criticized for failing to anticipate the community's unique physical needs such as neglecting to plan for teenager hangouts, corner stores, cemeteries, or facilities for entrepreneurs (Canadian Employment & Immigration Advisory Council, 1987).

J.A. Riffel (1975) found that when attempts were made to involve residents in the planning process of new towns, the "results appear[ed] positive" (p. 21). Donald Klein (1978) echoed this sentiment when he stated: "the quality of life in any community is diminished seriously when significant numbers of people are deprived of viable choices within any aspects of their lives" (1978). According to Klein (1978), excluding citizens from the process of community building is not only a violation of freedom; it is also an attempt to turn communities into institutions.

The long-term impact of citizens' exclusion from the community building process can range from apathy to antagonism (Robinson, 1962). Ira Robinson (1962) believes that comprehensively planned communities, where the "usual duties, responsibilities and freedoms of citizenship" are lacking, gives rise to a "tradition of lethargy" (p. 153). Despite spanning two disciplines and 30 years, the findings of Elinor Ostrom and Ira Robinson reinforce one another with respect to the impacts of government/corporate intervention on community interaction. Both agree that personal initiative and community effort are quashed when community services are decided upon and provided for by external actors, such as state intermediaries or company managers. Gary Paget and R.A. Rabnett (1983), in concert with a cadre of social capital theorists, conclude that when decision-making power is taken from the hands of a community, its development can be "retarded" (p.20), thus restricting the citizenry's ability to resolve collective action problems themselves.

However, some communities respond to exclusion from the community building process with a vengeance. Active animosity, described by Robinson as a "major disadvantage" of new planned resource towns, can propel citizens into action. In some communities, disillusionment with development plans and exclusion from decision-making led to the formation of civic associations, such as neighbourhood and residents' associations (Canadian Employment & Immigration Advisory Council, 1987; Thorns, 1976). These pressure groups not only influenced the "shape of the community" (Thorns, 1976, p. 88), they also heightened the 'us versus them' conflict between the community's 'power brokers' (often managers from the resource companies or government-appointed administrators) and citizens.

In response to this mobilization against technocratic planners and master planning processes, the profession underwent significant changes in the years following the formation and evaluation of new towns (Sandercock, 1998). Critics of new town planning felt strongly that participation not be left to

chance or taken for granted (Siemens, 1973). Planning theorists devised numerous strategies and processes to increase meaningful participation in community decision-making. Their strategies had to contend with a significant obstacle that impeded citizen participation in new town planning: the economic pressure to build a community within the span of a few short months (driven by the industry's desire to delve quickly into resource extraction).

Starting in the 1960s, planning theorists began, slowly, to discard their belief that planners ought to make decisions on behalf of citizens. Over the course the next few decades, they began focusing on means of enhancing residents' capacity to make meaningful choices. Doris Wright (1978), for example, called for "comprehensive social planning", which emphasized building social relationships, to occur in concert with physical land-use planning, while J.A. Riffel (1975) suggested that "procedures for consultation with prospective residents before completion of townsite plans" be developed (p. 18). Stanley Murrell (1978) took his colleagues' suggestions a step further by insisting the planners perform psychological planning, which considers who has control, who is accountable, and what the channels of decision-making should be. Murrell (1978) also implored planners to create "undermanned" groupings (a small number of people trying to accomplish a large number of tasks) to promote greater civic participation and sense of ownership (p. 36).

Another proposed mechanism for enhanced political and social development within new towns was put forward by P.H. Wichern (1971) who called for a plan to be drafted that includes a "bill of social rights" and a "free continuing course in political participation" (p. 107). Paget & Rabnett (1983) also developed a new planning model entitled "planning by invitation", which focused on "involving those who will ultimately own the community's problems and developing the frameworks and resources which facilitate the community's making decisions itself" (p. 14).

These mechanisms, developed to counteract citizen lethargy and company paternalism, were the precursor to social capitalists' theories of building civic community. Both critics of new town planning theory and social capital theorists call for the employment of facilitative, participatory structures as a means of increasing citizen participation in and control over the resolution of community problems. New towns, where the resource companies and government intermediaries control planning and development, seem to struggle with building strong community-wide social capital.

This belief formed the basis of P.H. Wichern's 1971 study of four resource-based communities. Wichern (1971) thought that ideal communities are places where "citizens are enfranchised and encouraged to participate in determining the future of the community" (p. 94). However after completing his empirical research, Wichern was forced to rethink his initial assumption, as one of the communities he studied defied his belief that formalized mechanisms of involvement in planning and local governance was the key to an enfranchised citizenry. In Pine Falls, a pulp and paper community in Manitoba, citizen participation in community activities and social integration across sectors of the community was described as excellent. All citizens, from managers to plant workers, took an active interest in their community. Civic community had emerged there in spite of the fact that the town was almost entirely run and owned by the company. It was planned and built by, and for, the company. At the time of the study, nearly 45 years after its birth, the community still had no elected council.

Unlike the other communities studied, Pine Falls had reached such an advanced stage of social development that it came closest to fulfilling Wichern's notion of an 'ideal' community. In Pine Falls, citizens felt they could affect the direction of their community informally through social relations, despite the absence of formal mechanisms of political participation. Although citizens had not played a formalized role in the planning or the on-going governance of their town they were content with the management of their community and "appeared to have a stronger voice in their local government" than the other communities studied (1971, p. 84). Wichern's findings led him to question the importance of citizen participation in planning and local governance - perhaps it is not the only "necessary input leading to political development" (p. 90).[11] He found "the attitudes of citizens" (p. 90) to be a better barometer of social and political development than formalized participation in planning processes and local governance.

Wichern (1971) concludes his report by calling for further research into the roles that the company, the province, and pressure groups play during the initial stages of a community's development. He asks to what degree does the personality and vision of the company/provincial administrator influence the future political development of the community? Wichern encourages other researchers to study the attitudes and role of the company and the province during the initial planning and

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[11] Political development refers to the "evolution in the form, role, and scope of government" It reflects a common "conception of government as a political system having a form of decision-making, a role in the social environment, and a particular scope of policy which it may make for the residents and environment within its jurisdiction" (1971, p. 10).

development phases. He believes these processes may reveal how a community's personality is formed.

In his 1976 book <u>Quest for Community</u>, David Thorns builds upon Wichern's findings and recommendations, by developing a more comprehensive model of the factors influencing the formation of a new town's 'personality'. According to Thorns (1976), the following four factors influence the formation of social dynamics in new towns (p. 141-143):

- ♦ Social Allocation – The political, economic and administrative framework within which planners operate.

- ♦ Role of Key Position Holders – The attitudes and vision of individuals and groups who hold key positions

- ♦ Voluntarism – The degree of civic participation and involvement.

- ♦ Scale of Development – The degree of communal self-sufficiency.

Wichern and Thorns made an important contribution to the literature by showing that the dynamics influencing the formation of a community's personality is more complex than the theories originally proposed by numerous new town planning critics. The work of Raymond Burby and Shirley Weiss helped to further dispel the commonly held belief that monopolistic control over a new town's development, by company officials and expert planners, stifles social development, thereby negatively affecting citizens' satisfaction with the community's quality of life. Burby & Weiss (1976) conducted a comparative study of new communities (products of new town planning) versus conventional communities (developed prior to the era of new town planning) in the United States. They found, "new community development generally had much less impact on social perceptions and participation than many planners had anticipated" (p. 9). Differences in residents' social perspectives, participation in non-political civic activities, and satisfaction with quality of life were negligible across the divide of new versus conventional communities.

This contradictory evidence brings about the question - did the critics of new town planning get it wrong? Was the theory, confidently purported by Glick, Robinson, Riffel, Klein, Paget, Rabnett and others, that planned communities' failure to achieve a more socially engaged community stemmed from a lack of citizen participation in decision-making, an erroneous one? The findings of Wichern, Burby and Weiss call into question the belief that comprehensive master planning, led by resource

company managers and government intermediaries, dampens resident satisfaction, sense of community, quality of life, and civic participation.

2.5   Traversing the Divide between Planning & Social Capital Formation

Despite decades of time and evolving concepts of civic community, both social capital and planning theorists have pointed to the nature and process of state interventionist strategies as a determinant in the formation of a community's social dynamics. According to some social capital scholars, interventionist strategies and processes that encourage local autonomy, citizen participation, and cooperation breed civic community. This agrees with the belief, held by new town planning critics of the 1970s and 1980s, that participatory planning processes encourage grassroots decision-making as a means of building 'good community'.

Despite this overlap between the two disciplines, planning's role in the construction of community-wide social capital has received little attention from social capital scholars. However, some social capital researchers have acknowledged the role planning plays in the formation of social capital. In particular, Autar Dhesi (2000) believes that the process of community formation serves as social capital's birthing grounds. Planning is among a confluence of factors at play during the initial phases of a community's development. Further research into the causes and influences of planning in the creation of a community's social capital is required.

If a relationship is found to exist between planning processes and social capital formation, then a compelling argument can be made for social capital and planning theorists to pay closer attention to each other's research. On the other hand, if no relationship exists, then social capital researchers' search to determine the origins of a community's social capital will narrow and intensify. This study explores the origins, nature and behaviour of two resource communities' civic traditions through time. It has been designed to determine whether or not a relationship exists between social capital formation and the structure of planning processes.

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY PROFILES OF ATIKOKAN & ELLIOT LAKE

3.1   History Matters

This research investigates the formation of community-wide social capital through the lens of planning. It is prefaced on the assumption that every community forms a unique, pervasive civic tradition during the initial phases of its development.

Within the field of social capital research, several scholars (namely, Robert Putnam, Cynthia Duncan, and Francis Fukuyama) propound the notion of civic tradition. They believe that once a community's social capital has been produced it has remarkable staying power. In any community there are "long-established ways of doing things and ways of looking at things" (Warren, 1955, p. 11). These ways establish the tone and spirit of community, which is passed down from generation to generation as citizens' make choices based on "what people like us do" (Duncan, 1999, p. 190). Actions and decisions of community members are shaped by experiences in the social world – social relationships and the wider community context within which those relations occur (Duncan, 1999).

According to Putnam (1993) there are two broad social equilibria toward which all communities tend to evolve - communities are either civic or un-civic. Once a community's development has been set on a particular course, habits and methods of social interaction form, thereby reinforcing that trajectory (Putnam, 1993). These historical legacies are woven deep with a community's social fabric and tend to be self-reinforcing.

Putnam believes that civic community has deep historical roots. His research found a community's civic culture to be pervasive; invisibly guiding the choices and actions of its community members. For example, Southern Italy's civic tradition is reflected in its proverbs, "don't make loans, don't give gifts, don't do good, for it will turn out bad for you" and "when you see the house of your neighbour on fire, carry water to your own" (Putnam, 1993, p. 144).

But research has also shown that civic traditions mutate through time. They are changeable, but not erasable. Several social capital theorists (Autar Dhesi; Jonathan Fox; Mildred Warner) believe that a community's endowment of social capital is not "fixed by history" (Fox, 1996, p.1098). Empirical evidence has shown that as the macro-environment changes the level and nature of a community's

accumulated social capital varies accordingly (Dhesi, 2000). Changes to the macro-environment influences, but does not erode, a community's long-standing cultural habits and norms of social behaviour. Putnam (1993) found that even after the collapse of communal republicanism in the 17th century, citizens of Northern Italy continued to assume civic duties and responsibilities despite the predominance of autocratic politics which encouraged the formation of patron-client networks.

Given this aforementioned research, studying the confluence of factors at play during a community's formative development process ought to enhance one's understanding of the origins of community-wide social capital embedded within a community's long-standing civic tradition. Such studies require researchers to probe into a community's past.

According to Sidney Tarrow (1996) "social scientists ignore history at their peril" (p. 396). However, he also cautions against assuming that history is simply a "neutral reservoir of facts" - the social reconstruction of history can be tainted by a researcher's "set of theoretical hunches" (Tarrow, 1996, p. 396). Communities have multiple histories; stories of the past should not be told through one lens (Sandercock, 1998).

This chapter tells a story of Atikokan and Elliot Lake. Drawing upon information found in local history books and archives, I reconstructed the economic and social development of my hometowns. Despite being informed by numerous of secondary sources, the following story is one of many possible versions that could be told for it has been coloured by the intonations of local historians and by the theoretical assumptions introduced in previous chapters.

Table 1: Historical Comparison of Atikokan & Elliot Lake's Development & Growth

	Atikokan	Elliot Lake
Important Dates in History		
Founded	1899	1953
Improvement District Formed	1944	1955
Municipal Incorporation	1953	1966
Mine Closure Announcement	1972	1990
Mine Closures	1979-1980	1990-1992; 1996[*]
Population		
1956	2609	3791
1959	~6000	24316
1961	6674	15690
1972	5841	8545
1982	4744	18670
1991	4092	14089
1996	4043	13588
2001	3632	11956
Economy		
Pre-Mine Economy	Railroad	N/A
Dominant Mining Companies	Steep Rock Iron Mines Caland Ore Company Ltd.	Rio Algom Ltd. Denison Mines
Post-Mine Economy	Forestry; Power Generation; Tourism	Retirement; Tourism
Land-Use Planning & Development		
Authority Responsible	Steep Rock Iron Mines	Ontario Government
Parties Involved	SRIM; CNR; Improvement District Trustees; Civic Organizations (e.g. Chamber of Commerce; Women's Institute)	4 provincial ministries; federal government; 4 mining companies; 12 consulting firms & contractors; Improvement District Trustees
Type of Planning Strategy	Community-based; grassroots	Master planned by technocrats from outside
Economic Re-Development		
Authority Responsible	Township of Atikokan	City of Elliot Lake
Parties Involved	Atikokan Industrial Development Committee; Quetico Centre	City Council; economic development committee and related sub-committees; Economic Development Office; consulting firms
Planning Process	Closed	Open, participatory

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[*] Subsidized by Ontario's taxpayers, Stanleigh Mine (owned by Rio Algom) remained open until 1996.

3.2   The Atikokan Story: From Rail Town to Mine Town to Mill Town

Atikokan, located 200 kilometres west of Thunder Bay near the northern border of Minnesota, has reinvented its economy numerous times since it was settled in 1899. From a railtown, to a centre for iron ore extraction, to a forestry community, Atikokan's raison d'etre has evolved yet its stalwart will to survive and civic spirit has remained unchanged.

At first, Atikokan was home to Canada's aboriginal people. The Atikokan area offered shelter and food to nomadic Ojibwa hunters dating back nearly 9000 years ago. Atikokan is derived from the Ojibwe word Aticosepi meaning Caribou River (Chamber of Commerce, 1949). During the 18th and 19th centuries fur traders travelled through the region along well-established canoe routes although they did not settle in the area for any length of time. By the end of the 19th century fur trading had given way to mineral exploration.

By the turn of the 20th century, almost the entire area surrounding the Atikokan region had been staked with mining claims.   The prospects for mining riches were so bright that the Ontario government fought to reclaim the region from Manitoba. The Atikokan area once again joined the province of Ontario in 1889 after spending 8 years as a Manitoban community.

Wealth from the extraction of minerals was not instantaneous despite strong indications that gold and iron ore deposits were strewn throughout the area. As early as 1869 large blocks of rich iron ore were found but complications of accessibility, transportation and economics hindered further exploration (Swackhammer, 1986). A few small mines operated sporadically throughout the area around the turn of the 20th century, but none lasted. The same was true for small logging operations.

The first semblance of a townsite was formed in 1899 with the construction of the Canadian Northern Railroad between Winnipeg and Thunder Bay. Atikokan was established as a divisional point along the rail line and Atikokan's first white settlers, Tom and Mary Rawn, seized this opportunity and built the community's first commercial building: the Pioneer Hotel. A community was born.

In the short years following, a station, coal docks, a roundhouse, a machine shop, and bunkhouses were built. The original townsite was planned and laid out by the CNR. Lots were carved out of thick Northern bush and sold to employees of the railway and to private individuals. Over the years

Atikokanites have struggled to forgive their forefathers for choosing to build the townsite in a swamp with nothing more than a small river meandering through the town.

During the first half of the 20th century Atikokan's population slowly grew from 30 to 250. This fledgling, remote village was nothing more than a rail town and a supply centre for the area's prospectors, homesteaders, aboriginals, fishermen, and lumberjacks. Atikokan's first residents were pioneers in the true sense of the word - they made do with very little. The village's only public facility – the jail – also duelled as a morgue, school and church (Women's Institute, 1954). Each morning the prisoners were discharged to allow school to be conducted and when students misbehaved they were sent to a jail cell to serve their punishment (Nault, 1990). The Red Cross administered health care services from the comforts of a railcar. Entertainment came in the form of dances, card games, picnics, and watching the passenger trains pull in and out of the community four times a day. "We had lots of good times, but we had to make them ourselves," recalled one of Atikokan's longest standing pioneers (Nault, 1990).

During the first half of the 20th century, the Women's Institute was a moving force in the community. It was Atikokan's most prominent and active civic organization. From 1922 onwards, the Women's Institute served as the welfare board, the children's aid society, the school board, the public works department, and the Red Cross. Its role in the community's social and physical development was unparalleled. Approximately one in 10 residents belonged to the Institute. They worked together with the men to repair roads and lay cinder block sidewalks. They organized the First of July celebrations, dances, school concerts, skating parties, and card parties. They used these events to raise money for needy families, for school supplies and equipment, for a lending library, and for so much more (Women's Institute, 1954). But the organization was not able to survive the transition from a rail town to a bustling centre of iron ore extraction. As service clubs formed and formal organizations (such as the school board and the municipality) assumed work previously carried out by the Institute, the organization quietly faded away and became a distant memory in the hearts and minds of Atikokan's pioneers.

The Mining Development & Its Developers

The decision made in 1938 to harvest iron ore reserves buried deep beneath 150 feet of water and layers upon layers of clay, slit, and sludge irrevocably changed Atikokan forever. For many years prospectors knew the area was rich with iron ore deposits, but few had the entrepreneurial wherewithal, technical knowledge, and financial resources to extract this mineral. Julian Cross the prospector and the 'brainchild' of the operation; Joseph Errington the risk taking mine developer;

Donald Hogarth the organizer of private and public financing; Cyrus Eaton the 'tycoon extraordinaire' who financially backed the development; M.S. Fotheringham overseer of the mining and townsite development; and Syd Hancock a surveyor who devoted his life to Atikokan's civic matters; these were the men who made one of Canada's greatest engineering triumphs happen.

To access the ore, they were forced to divert a river system, drain and dredge the lake. This required "reworking the local geography and topography over an area of 100 square miles" (Cowan, 1960). Dams were constructed. Rock cuts were created. More earth was moved in the development of the mine than during the construction of the Panama Canal and St. Lawrence Seaway combined (Chamber of Commerce, 2000).

This undertaking was not only of Herculean proportions for the engineers but for the financiers as well. The mining development's forefathers formed the Steep Rock Iron Mines (SRIM) company in 1939 to help finance the operation. It was a small Canadian-owned corporation that was resource rich and cash poor (Michels, 1980). It did not possess other properties to generate profits for reinvestment. Without hefty contributions from Cyrus Eaton, a millionaire from the United States, and government funding (from both from Canada and the United States) the mine would have never been developed. James Cowan (1960) of the Northern Miner Press Ltd. proclaimed the development to be, "one of the most extraordinary international examples of a cooperative project involving a group of governments and private business of which there is a full public record " (p. 7).

Cyrus Eaton's influence on Atikokan's economic and social development is an important one to note. Cyrus grew up in Pugwash, Nova Scotia where he obtained an "acute realization of what it meant for a thriving community to lose its main source of jobs" as Pugwash was an abandoned port town (Nault, 1983, p. 154). Pugwash is where Cyrus learned the value of community, as his family remained faithfully committed to the community in the face of severe economic decline.

Eaton grew to become one of the United States most "unorthodox billionaires" (Nault, 1983, p. 154). Cyrus left Nova Scotia for Cleveland when he was a young adult and quickly immersed himself in the utilities sector and acquainted himself with the Rockafellers. By 27 he was a millionaire. His empire extended to include coal, iron ore, steel, transportation, and paint industries. But Cyrus never forgot his roots. Cyrus had a reputation for 'saving' communities from losing their major industry by purchasing and/or bailing the companies out of financial strive. He believed in "on-the-spot management"; he believed in community. He was also proud to be Canadian. When Steep Rock

Iron Mines' founding fathers asked him to financially back their fledgling company, Eaton eagerly invested and was instantly acclaimed as a local resident-in-principle (Cowan, 1960). It was Eaton who insisted Steep Rock Iron Mines locate its headquarters in Atikokan for he did not concur with the prevalent practice of managing industries from a distant financial centre.

Cyrus Eaton was not the only one of Atikokan's founding fathers who cared about community. Affectionately referred to as "Pop", M.S. Fotheringham served as SRIM's president and was responsible for transforming prospective riches into riches. He was also one of the first people involved in the mining development to establish a family residence in the Atikokan area. This act set the tone for all subsequent mine managers who followed in his footsteps. Atikokan was destined to be a caring, sharing family town.

According to Pop Fotheringham the well being of the town and its residents was the final justification for the mine (Michels, 1980). Pop demonstrated his commitment to the community by guiding the town's development, in partnership with the government, to ensure it developed into a modern, well-planned, self-governed community (Nault, 1983, p. 218). He believed in and encouraged grassroots, citizen-led community development. Steep Rock Iron Mines, according to Pop Fotheringham, had a responsibility to support the town, but not to run it. If the fine balance between control versus support was successfully achieved, then Fotheringham believed that the community would have the capacity to find an alternative economic base if the mine were to discontinue its operations (Michels, 1980). "He was instrumental in creating conditions for the town to maintain and build on its traditions of self-responsibility," stated Bob Michels in his 1980 analysis of Atikokan's ability to diversify and strengthen its economy.

Pop Fotheringham and Cyrus Eaton's philosophy of community betterment permeated the entire company. Senior management were expected to actively immerse themselves in community life and contribute to community betterment. By the same token, they were discouraged from trying to influence municipal affairs for the direct benefit of the company. Moreover, "they searched out ways in which the people and activities could be soundly integrated into the life of the community without dominating those who had lived in Atikokan before the coming of the mines" (Michels, 1980, p. 9).

Syd Hancock is a prime example of an exemplar SRIM employee who dedicated his life to civic affairs. Syd served on town council for 21 years. He was Reeve for 12 of those years. Syd, along with Fotheringham, was also instrumental in establishing the community's Chamber of Commerce.

Given his experience as a surveyor, Syd chaired the Chamber's Town Planning & Civic Improvement committee. He was charged with the responsibility of working with the town administration to encourage home beautification, to improve street lighting, garbage disposal and care of the cemetery, to construct a golf course, and to implement zoning by-laws and building codes. He believed effective planning and control mechanisms would ensure that "Atikokan [grew] into a modern town [that] its citizens [would] be proud to live in" (Women's Institute, 1954, p. 59). In addition to his involvement on town council and the Chamber of Commerce, Syd sat on numerous volunteer boards and committees.

But Syd, Pop, Cyrus, and other SRIM management executives weren't the only ones interested in Atikokan's long-term economic and social well being, nor was Steep Rock Iron Mines the only company interested in extracting iron ore from Atikokan's deposits. Caland Ore Company Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Inland Steel Mining Company of Chicago, signed a lease with Steep Rock Iron Mines in 1953 to develop one of SRIM's ore bodies. The acquisition secured this multinational, American-based corporation with an ongoing supply of iron ore for its steel furnaces. It also helped alleviate Steep Rock Iron Mines' cash flow problems by providing the small Canadian company with healthy tonnage royalties. After spending seven years and $80 million dollars Caland Ore was finally ready to produce ore.

Building a Permanent Community

Just as the mine properties were being developed at a feverish pace, so too, was the community of Atikokan. It was no longer a sleepy little remote village where nearly everyone was employed by the railway. Virtually overnight, it was transformed into a bustling and booming mining community with a severe housing shortage and an over abundance of red dust careening through the community. The community mushroomed from a population of 300 in 1938 to 1000 in 1944 to 4500 in 1953.

It was the 1940s and men were returning from overseas after finishing war duty. Nearly every able-bodied man that came to the area found work at the mine. The roads weren't paved and the accommodations were scarce. To help alleviate the housing shortage, Steep Rock Iron Mines constructed a small, self-sufficient community near the mine site (a few kilometres away from the town of Atikokan) for its mine managers and workers.

From the beginning, an attitude of permanence percolated through the community, from the mine managers to their employees. Attitude translates into action. The mining companies, the

government, and the citizens – mine managers, miners, entrepreneurs, and railworkers – worked to bring houses, roads, sidewalks, highways, hospitals, recreation amenities and the like to fruition.

The fledgling community was not destined to be a transient 'sleep' camp where no roots were laid. It was to be a planned, permanent, and modern community. The days when companies owned the town were rapidly coming to a close and government involvement in resource and community stewardship was coming to the fore. Atikokan was developed at a time when the school of thought on resource communities was transitioning from "tar paper shacks and haphazard development to permanent, orderly, planned communities" (Michels, 1980, p. 10). But the policy book on planned resource communities had not been completed by the time Atikokan developed into a single-industry resource community. As a result, Steep Rock Iron Mines, not the provincial government, was the authority responsible for townsite development. This was unusual for resource communities developed in the years following the conclusion of World War II. During this era planning and development was typically the responsibility of the province, not the company.

Nevertheless, government legislation did play an important role in creating a framework for local governance. The Ontario government's recently created Improvement District legislation required new towns to incorporate and form a central administration.[12] These non-elected boards of trustees were given powers typically bestowed upon a town council. But the trustees also acted as a school board, health board, and any other local board that the town required until such time as the citizenry was prepared to allow elected representatives to preside over their municipal affairs. Under this legislation, the work of the Women's Institute was taken over by the provincially created Improvement District.

Incorporated in 1944, three trustees were appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-In-Council and they were directly responsible to the Department of Municipal Affairs, not to the citizens of Atikokan. Each trustee represented an economic sector of the community – the railway, the mines, and the local business community. All three trustees resided in the community. For 9 years the Improvement District oversaw Atikokan's development.

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[12] Atikokan, in the eyes of the government, the mining companies, and resource community scholars, was considered to be a new town on Canada's resource frontier (despite originally being established decades earlier as a divisional point along a rail line).

Subdivisions were planned, lots were surveyed and sanitary sewers and watermains were constructed under the auspices of the Improvement District. But Atikokan's Improvement District was not single-handedly responsible for the development of the Atikokan townsite. They had help from the mining companies, the Chamber of Commerce, the Red Cross, service clubs and civic organizations, and the CNR (which was responsible for selecting the location of the townsite, laying out the first few streets and planning the first housing subdivision). Steep Rock Iron Mines purchased land and built a subdivision with over 100 company-owned homes in an attempt to lessen the severe shortage of family housing. Consistent with SRIM's management philosophy, the company was not interested in owning residential real estate or serving as its employees' landlord. In 1957, occupants of houses in the company-owned subdivision were given the option of either purchasing the house or finding accommodations elsewhere.

With the demand for housing outstripping supply, developers purchased lots and built single-family dwellings at a feverish pace. Quality took a backseat. Some residents chose to purchase pre-built homes while others chose to build their own. The mining companies also acquired land and built homes for their managers. Caland Ore's homes blended in with the existing housing stock as the company chose to discretely build homes throughout the community while SRIM, on the other hand, bought all of the lots on an entire street and, according to the townsfolk, built 'snob row'.

Securing accommodation was the residents' first priority. But once this was found, residents quickly became restless for services and amenities enjoyed by most other modern, permanent Canadian communities. Citizens quickly learned that if they wanted to enjoy amenities of modern communities, then they would have to build those facilities themselves because nobody else was going to do it for them. Numerous service clubs, women's auxiliaries, associations, and clubs cropped up and fundraising activities were abound.

The building of the first Protestant church and the first modern hospital serve as excellent examples of community 'barn-raising'. In 1947 people from twenty-three different Protestant denominations pulled together, raised funds, and built the First Protestant Church. It was a community church that served all Protestants irrespective of their denomination (Women's Institute, 1954).

The replacement of the community's two-bed 'shack' with a 15-bed modern hospital in 1950 was "the culmination of a wonderful effort on the part of the people of Atikokan and Steep Rock Iron Mines." (Chamber of Commerce, 1950, p. 6). Citizens undertook various fundraising activities;

miners contributed a day's pay; and Steep Rock Iron Mines donated construction crews. Together with financial contributions from local employers and "business friends of the mine" the community raised half of the hospital's capital cost with the Red Cross Society and senior government footing the rest of the bill.

During Atikokan's formative development years, the local Chamber of Commerce played an instrumental role in the provision of services and amenities worthy of a booming mining town. Most notably, the Chamber led the crusade to connect Atikokan to the rest of Canada via pavement. It actively lobbied for the construction of a highway to Atikokan. After several letter-writing campaigns and trips to Toronto, the Chamber was victorious. Until 1954, when the highway from Thunder Bay to Atikokan opened, there was no easy escape from Atikokan. The train was the only way in and out of town. Although nearly every resident came from somewhere else, once they arrived in Atikokan, they all shared a sense of being cut off from the rest of the world (Nault, 1990). The lack of a highway strengthened social networks but it was also perceived as a bottleneck to growth.

By 1953 the citizens were more than prepared to control their own destiny. After strong lobbying from the Ratepayers Association and the Improvement District board of trustees, the provincial government dissolved the Improvement District and established a Township. The first municipal election was held in 1953 with the community's former hotel proprietor turned housing developer elected as Reeve. Notably, this was also the election that kick-started Syd Hancock's (a SRIM manager) 21 year career as a municipal politician. James Cowan (1960) of the Northern Miner Press Ltd. in his recount of SRIM's development history noted that at the time of Atikokan's first municipal election the community had already developed "a fine brand of civic spirit, locally-produced and, surprisingly, it had established traditions" (p. 20). He noted this was due in part to the citizenry's relationship with Steep Rock Iron Mines.

As the years passed the town council developed a reputation of being fiscally conservative. By using debentures to pay for the construction of schools, roads, sidewalks, sewer systems and the like throughout the 1950s, the municipality by the conclusion of the 1960s was virtually debt-free (Michels, 1980). Life was good and that sentiment was reflected in low voter turnout. In the 1962 election, voter turnout dipped to 37% - its lowest in years (Nault, 1990). What was there to complain about? Jobs were secure, property taxes were reasonable, streets were paved, and amenities were provided.

Life in Atikokan was about to change.

The End Is Near....or is it?

For 12 years Caland Ore shipped ore to its native land. Then in 1972 Caland Ore announced that it would cease operations in 1976 which would, in effect, displace 400 workers. Such advanced warning from a mining company of an impending closure was unheard of. But Caland Ore was a good corporate citizen. It upheld is original agreement with Steep Rock Iron Mines to provide advanced notice in the event of its closure. And it cared for its employees and the community. Announcing the mine closure at the last legal minutes wouldn't have been consistent with Caland Ore's managerial philosophy (Michels, 1980). Caland Ore also kept the community fully informed as it prepared to discontinue operations.

Steep Rock Iron Mines, on the other hand, reiterated its commitment to the community with the announcement at it would assume operations at Caland's property as soon as it became available (Nault, 1990). Despite SRIM's assurance of a long-economic life, citizens of Atikokan weren't willing to take any chances. The community wasted little time in mobilizing resources to deal with Caland Ore's impending closure.

In 1973 town council initiated the Atikokan Industrial Development (AID) ad-hoc committee in response to Caland Ore's announcement. It was a grassroots, citizen-led working group that focused on helping the community cope with the loss of a major employer and on expanding its economic base. The AID Committee involved a "cross-section of about 40 people from the community, largely business people, on a flexible basis" (Quetico Centre, 1978, p. 1). Most notably, Caland Ore allowed for and encouraged the involvement of its senior management in the development of the community's economic diversification strategy. This was consistent with Caland Ore's corporate philosophy of encouraging its senior people to actively invest and contribute to community life (Michels, 1980).

However, the AID Committee came under considerable fire from citizens who felt that the future of Atikokan was being determined by an insular group of elites in the private and public sector. Input from "ordinary working people" (Kolton, 1981, p. 39) was not sought. The committee had made a conscious decision to not keep the community fully informed of potential industrial possibilities in an attempt to keep the citizenry's expectations low. As one committee member reflected, "the price

of such a secrecy was a failure of most citizens to understand and appreciate AID's efforts and problems" (Michels, 1980, p. 19). As a result, the committee's purpose was not widely understood and its purpose (or lack thereof) became a focal point of argument (Michels, 1980). It is interesting to note that this public pressure exerted towards AID committee members, was taking place at a time when closed planning processes were giving way to open, participatory processes.

Atikokan's redevelopment also took place at a time when processes of community economic development were just beginning to be structured and developed. Atikokan's economic development strategy was not just the result of hardworking community volunteers. Less than 30 kilometres down the road is Quetico Centre, an adult education and retreat centre. Quetico Centre donated its staff to the AID committee for the purpose of planning and facilitating strategy sessions. Quetico Centre's employees were members of the community too and they wanted Atikokan to survive. At little cost to the committee, planning sessions were held, action plans were created "by those who had to make the plans work", and reports were carefully crafted to "trigger specific government or community action" (Michels, 1980, p. 20).

The AID committee focused its energies on encouraging business and industry to locate in Atikokan to hire displaced miners who were willing to change careers to remain in Atikokan (Michels, 1980). Other committees were struck to help prepare miners for pending mine closure by assisting with job searches, offering retraining, and addressing social dislocations. From mine managers to miners to councillors to local business owners, there was little doubt in the hearts and minds of Atikokanites that their little town would survive.

Within the first few years, the AID committee had several successes. One success came after committee members learned that Ontario Hydro was interested in building a new coal-fired generating station on the shores of Lake Superior. The AID committee wanted Atikokan to be home to the proposed generating station and quickly assembled a bid. After initially dismissing the idea of constructing a plant on a small inland lake, the AID committee continued to use its political connections to pressure Ontario Hydro into giving Atikokan a fair assessment by performing a cost-benefit analysis on the proposed site (Paulson, 1993). The study ascertained that a generating station on an inland lake in the Atikokan area was not only feasible but it was also going to be economical over the long-term with savings stemming from less expensive transportation costs in comparison with the other proposed sites. Politics played an important role in the AID committee's successful

bid to secure the generating station. Political pressure from the Ontario government and the community's economic fragility helped Atikokan to win the bid (Michels, 1980).

Construction began in 1978 and continued for eight years employing approximately 800 people. Two hundred permanent positions were created with the commencement of operations in 1985. The development was criticized for employing fewer residents than expected. Approximately 2 in 3 workers had relocated to Atikokan to build and/or work at the generating station. Many of those newcomers became actively involved in Atikokan's civic life.

The AID committee's other major success was its bid to persuade an American particleboard manufacturer to establish a plant in Atikokan. After noting an abundance of Poplar trees in the Atikokan area, the AID committee began actively courting a particleboard manufacturer. They were also successful in persuading the government not to allow the company to locate anywhere else (Paulson, 1993). Construction began in the latter portion of the 1970s and by the conclusion of the decade 145 people were employed at the plant.

Needless to say with both mines still operating, and the AID committee's successes, the community boomed during the 1970s. At one time the population was estimated to have climbed as high as 7500. Once again Atikokan faced a housing shortage, which was alleviated by the construction of housing in a subdivision that had remained dormant since it was surveyed decades earlier.

With money in the municipal coffers, and the government willing to offer financial assistance to a community on the verge of losing 1000 jobs, Atikokan's civic leaders decided that this was the perfect time to invest in community amenities. Not only did it make financial sense to develop basic community amenities needed to attract people and industry, it also made common sense. A swimming pool, a golf course, a curling complex, a campground, a sewage treatment plant, a seniors' drop-in centre, a museum, and an industrial mall were built during the 1970s. Airport improvements and a hospital expansion also took place.

Many of these projects benefited from donations of money, labour and materials from local businesses and civic organizations. Citizens, local businesses, town council and senior government chose to invest in Atikokan at a time when most investors typically would have pulled their investment. But developing community amenities was integral to the community's economic diversification strategy. The AID committee believed that it would lead to heightened citizen

satisfaction, attraction of new businesses, and reaffirmation of the community's commitment to a healthy future (Michels, 1980).

But the heydays of the 1970s were rapidly coming to a close. After announcing in 1974 to extend operations until 1979, Caland Ore's last train of ore was shipped in April 1980. Caland Ore's extension interfered with Steep Rock Iron Mines plan to harvest ore from Caland's property. Throughout the 1970s Steep Rock Iron Mines explored numerous ways of extending the life of its own mining operation from deepening the pit to developing new properties. Time and time again Steep Rock Iron Mines' employees were given hope that their jobs would be secured for another 10, 20, or 30 years.

But an oversupply of ore on the world market, competition from operations in developing countries, lack of demand for the type of ore found in the Atikokan area, and rising production costs led Steep Rock Iron Mines to finally throw in the towel. In 1978, its employees were devastated to learn that in one year's time all operations would come to a grinding halt. Feelings of betrayal and anger emanated from the rank and file for they had been told ore production would last for a hundred years. In the words of the local union president, "Steep Rock at one time had a heart." (qtd. in Michels, 1980, p. 13). The image of Steep Rock Iron Mines as a family company that cared for the community and its employees was shattered on the day when its employees received their pink slips. Disbelief and disillusionment set in.

By the fall of 1980 the mine site had all but been abandoned. Although, at one time the two mines had employed upwards of 1400 workers, within the course of 20 short years, both mines had downsized to zero.

The Departure from single-industry to diversified economy

In 1980, CBC reporter Peter Mansbridge came to Atikokan to create a newscast about the town that died. Upon his arrival, Mansbridge quickly changed his tune and created a feature entitled *The Town that Wouldn't Die*. Reflecting back on his experience in Atikokan a few years later Mansbridge said, "I have never seen a community so determined to persevere despite tremendous odds as when I visited Atikokan. (Paulson, 1993, p. 37).

Despite having been successful in attracting major employers in the 1970s, Atikokan's transition from single industry to diversified economy was far from easy. Virtually overnight the forestry sector

became one of Atikokan's primary economic pillars. Although, overshadowed by the mines, the forestry sector had been a steady employer in the area even before the iron ore era.

Approximately 33% of displaced miners found local employment (Kolton, 1981). Many became bushworkers; some found work at the new particleboard plant; others became owners of, or worked for, local businesses; some kept their homes and commuted long distances to mining and logging camps elsewhere; and others found work at the large, long-standing sawmill operation 30 kilometres east of Atikokan. Over the years this sawmill has survived fire, bankruptcy, and several ownership changes to become one of Atikokan's major employers in the post-mining era. Employing approximately 200 residents, today the mill faces its greatest obstacle to date – a scarce wood supply coupled with US trade restrictions on lumber.

37% of displaced Steep Rock Iron Mines and Caland Ore employees left the community primarily for mining jobs in other communities (Kolton, 1981). This amounted to approximately 300 families. A small percentage returned to Atikokan after struggling to adjust to strange and unfamiliar places, spaces and cultures. Nearly 25% of displaced miners retired, semi-retired, remained unemployed, or became recipients of disability or workers compensation.

Despite 60% of Atikokan's workforce having been employed at the mines, the community's population only fell by 23% to 4700 after the mines closed (Paulson, 1993). Approximately 600 families chose to stay. "Prior to the mine closing there were a substantial number of people who stated flatly and unequivocally that they were not leaving, without any assurance of any type of employment to ensure their livelihood" (Kolton, 1981, p. 13). With homeownership as high as 85%, most people were unwilling to leave their homes (Ross, 1979).

But there was a price to be paid for being fervently loyal. The residential sector's taxes rose 15% to compensate for the shrinking commercial and industrial tax base. The municipality was forced to scale back its services and some recreational amenities were "turned back to the people" (Kolton, 1981, p. 30). School enrolment fell, forcing schools to close. Some merchants closed their doors. Membership and service fees increased. Employment opportunities for youth declined. Shrinking memberships forced several service clubs to disband.

Yet in the midst of this doom and gloom, Atikokan's citizenry was able to retain its will to survive and community spirit. "Many have commented on how well the town has responded to difficult situations; the ability to bounce back and to continue to thrive." (Kolton, 1981, p. 22). Surprisingly,

less than two years after the mines had closed, Atikokan's unemployment level was not significantly higher than any other healthy Northern Ontario town and, in some instances, it was lower.

In his story of Atikokan's economic diversification process, Bob Michels reiterates the important role civic leaders played in Atikokan's renewal: "Atikokan has been fortunate in having a cadre of citizens who care about their community and are willing to contribute to its growth and development" (1980, p. 21). However, the mine closures not only resulted in the displacement of hundreds of miners but it also meant the loss of civic leadership from numerous highly educated, bright, motivated mine managers. Suddenly the AID committee, the hospital board, the police services board, the school board, the Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, and numerous other civic associations lost several of their upstanding members leaving a void in civic leadership that was not easily replaced.

This loss, coupled with fewer successes and a dearth of new ideas, led the AID committee to eventually secure funding for the creation of a professional economic development commissioner in 1978. At a time when economic development was still a foreign concept to many, the community of Atikokan forged an innovative cost-sharing arrangement with the Ministry of Northern Affairs to secure funding assistance for economic development. Once the commissioner was hired, he succeeded in convincing several service clubs to financially support the creation of a small business development and lending centre. Community development practitioners and scholars alike deemed Atikokan as pioneer in the field of grassroots, community-based economic development.

By 1986 the volunteer AID committee had been completely phased out and replaced with a municipally-independent economic development office that also functioned as a community futures organization. This office was specifically designed to act a facilitator of grassroots, citizen-led economic activity through the provision of leadership and guidance, rather than direction and control. One of the first of its kind, the organization with a unique corporate and funding structure which "influenced how senior governments designed and delivered their economic development programs" (Paulson, 1993, p.2).

But the dramatic successes of the 1970s AID committee were never to be matched again. Atikokan successfully transitioned from an ore town to a forestry community supplemented by resource-based tourism, small value-added manufacturing, and a coal-fired electricity generation station. The abandoned mine pits, once the source of all of Atikokan's economic activity, have since filled with water, creating an unusual opportunity in the early 1990s for one of the pits to became home to an

experimental co-operative freshwater fish farm, which has since become a grassroots economic development success story.

Atikokan's dependence on the forestry sector has grown over the years while its population has continued to shrink. By 2001, Atikokan's population had dwindled to 3600 with 60% of its workforce dependent on forestry. In an era of shrinking wood supplies, forestry is proving to be no more stable or secure than mining. In 2003, nearly a hundred mill workers were temporarily laid off from the local sawmill and the particleboard plant went into receivership, putting 140 people out of work. By the conclusion of 2003 bushworkers and truck drivers felt the trickle down effect of the forestry sector's downturn.

Unwilling to roll over and die, Atikokan's citizenry pulled together and weathered the tough economic times, just as it had done twenty years earlier. The community's ability to change, adapt and survive continues to amaze onlookers. A former resident and labourer at the particleboard plant, who moved on to become a senior manager at several mills in British Columbia, purchased the local plant and resumed operations in the summer of 2004. This hometown entrepreneur has plans to introduce value-added production at the mill in the hopes of securing and strengthening Atikokan's economic future. By the spring of 2004, all of the displaced workers had found work again. Nobody knows when Atikokan's next downturn will hit but after surviving 50 years of booms and busts Atikokan's civic leaders are busy preparing for the worst.

2.3 Elliot Lake: "Our Wild Atomic City" turned Tranquil Retirement Town

Despite surviving several "boom and bust" cycles and, in the 1990s, the complete loss of its economic base, Elliot Lake has been shrouded by two entrenched characteristics since its inception in 1955 - the dominance of single industry and government involvement. Put simply, the provincial government created this model, planned and permanent community and gave it a quarter billion dollar bailout when the mines left. Within the span of a few years Elliot Lake went from being the "Uranium Capital of the World" to a centre for post-employment life and leisure. Today, transplanted senior citizens fill the places and spaces once created by mining multinationals and cared for by miners. In many ways, Elliot Lake is still a single-industry town. This is an admission that even Elliot Lake's proudest and hardest working civic leaders have been forced to make.

Elliot Lake was carved out of the thick forest of the Canadian Shield on the southwestern end of a magnificent sparkling lake bearing its name. The community is located thirty kilometres north of the TransCanada highway and the majestic north shore of Lake Huron strategically located between two of Northern Ontario's largest urban centres - Sudbury to its east and Sault Ste. Marie to its west. Prior to 1952 when highly desirable uranium deposits were discovered and staked out, the area was home to fur traders in the 1800s and transient lumberjacks in the early 1900s. In the latter portion of the 20th century, the area became one of the world's largest uranium extraction and production centres.

Elliot Lake's uranium base began in 1949 when two prospectors working in the Sault Ste. Marie area informed Franc Joubin of a possible uranium discovery in the area northwest of Lake Huron. Joubin confirmed their findings by determining that 90 square miles of uranium deposits lay beneath the surface rock in the area. During the next three years, Joubin, credited with the find, rose from prospector/geologist to president and managing director of Algom Uranium Limited, a company which laid claim to 56 000 acres of land laden with uranium, within the span of a year.

But without his partnership with Joseph Hirshhorn, Franc may well have died a hard-rock geologist instead of founder of the "Uranium Capital of the World". Hirshhorn, who had left Wall Street to pursue mining opportunities in Canada, took up residence on Bay Street where he grew to become a "corporate captain" in the mining industry (Joubin & Smyth, 1986). He was a shrewd speculator with impeccable intuition who gripped his money tightly. It took Joubin one month of persistent persuading to convince Hirshhorn to invest $35 000 into diamond drilling, on a hunch that rich uranium deposits lay buried deep in the Canadian Shield north of Lake Huron. This turned out to be money well spent.

Virtually overnight, $35 000 were transformed into $35 000 000 of profit which was split between Joubin and Hirshhorn. They formed a perfect partnership. Hirshhorn was the financial mastermind and Joubin was the mine developer. Both worked their magic from offices on Bay Street. Hirshhorn's other mining developments financed the construction of their first uranium mine. But in order to raise the $250 million needed to bring their other mines into production, Joubin and Hirshhorn were compelled to put their nascent company up for sale. Thus in January 1955 Joubin and Hirshhorn's uranium holdings became Rio Algom Limited, a subsidiary of the multi-national

mining conglomerate Rio Tinto Company of England Three years, later, in 1958, Rio Algom was operating eight mines and employing 7000 people in the Elliot Lake area.

In addition to Joubin and Hirshhorn's uranium empire, four other mines operated in the region. The most notable of these was Denison Mines which operated the largest mine for the longest period of time. Although Joubin and his colleagues took every possible measure to ensure their staking efforts were conducted under a thick veil of secrecy in order to secure the entire uranium fortune for themselves, Joubin's former field assistant caught wind of the discovery and also staked claims. But after approaching several uninterested mining promoters, including Hirshhorn, the humbled prospector sold his claims to Stephen Roman, founder of Denison Mines, for well-below his original asking price.

Stephen Roman immigrated to Canada from Slovakia as a young boy. For a few years, he tried, unsuccessfully, to make money on the stock market. Roman's luck began to change after he borrowed $1500 from his father-in-law to join a mining syndicate. He became a mining tycoon when he purchased a portion of the richest uranium property in Canada in the 1950s. Roman has been described as a free-enterpriser who had an unquenchable thirst for corporate takeovers and mansions. For instance, Roman ordered Denison Mines, of which he was one third owner, to construct a 14-bedroom mansion on the shores of Quirke Lake north of Elliot Lake. This served as his 'northern home' on the rare occasions when he would visit the site to which he owed his wealth and fortune. Following in Joubin and Hirshhorn's footsteps, Roman made decisions about his Elliot Lake mining operation from the comforts of his Toronto-based office. The fate of the miners was controlled from corporate boardrooms nearly 600 kilometres away from supposedly the best-planned mining community in Canada.

But it wasn't Joubin, Hirshhorn, or Roman who decided that a transient, hard-rock mining camp was not fitting for the 'ore of the future' that would fuel wars and electric generating stations for generations to come. Queen's Park, and policy forthcoming from its bureaucrats, bore the responsibility for carving out the permanent community of Elliot Lake based on modern planning concepts derived from the Garden City movement. Suburbia was headed north, just as profits reaped from the mines were headed south.

A full compliment of four provincial ministries, the federal government, four mining companies, and 12 consulting and contracting businesses were enlisted to build a home for the "Uranium Capital of the World" in a span of less than three years. Despite being subject to the highest of development standards, regulations, and by-laws, this 'model city' looked more like 'tent city' during the course of its construction phase. For several long months, Elliot Lake was nothing more than a hodgepodge of haphazard shacks, trailers and bunkhouses randomly situated amidst a sea of mud. The once pristine, sparkling Elliot Lake had not only become a receptacle for the community's sewage, but it also became the community's source of drinking water. After several outbreaks of hepatitis, the municipal authorities finally managed to rectify this situation (Dixon, 1996).

The provincial government spent $19 000 000 dollars directing Elliot Lake's development. It was to be held up as a role model for other haphazard resource towns. Elliot Lake signalled the end of an era. Mining companies would no longer own and operate communities. Elliot Lake was developed as an open town where miners owned their homes and where serviced lots for residential and commercial development were sold at public auctions to the highest bidder.

But convincing nomadic miners of the community's permanence proved to be a challenge as many were perfectly content to live in their trailers, leaving many brand-new single family dwellings empty. The provincial government, on the other hand, executed a successful publicity campaign that convinced Canadians that Elliot Lake was going to be a permanent fixture on Canada's resource frontier. In search of personal wealth and a place to put down roots, entrepreneurs flocked to the site of Canada's best-planned, modern resource community. Yet upon their arrival, they were struck by the realization that Elliot Lake was not an open town, where every citizen operated from a level playing field.

This sense of betrayal stemmed from the mining companies' preferential treatment of their employees, as evidenced by Elliot Lake's housing situation in the late 1950s. The mining companies built two-thirds of the town's initial housing stock (Robinson, 1962). They sold these homes to their employees at one-tenth of the cost and included a 'buy-back' clause in their contracts, while individuals in the private and public sector struggled to secure loans from Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CHMC) to build their own home. In the eyes of CHMC, Elliot Lake was a risky venture. Consequently, only mining company employees could obtain loans. Not able to build their own homes, non-mine workers were forced to wait for lots to come available once "the

housing needs of the mines had been satisfied" (Dixon, 1996, p. 117). Within that span of a few months, the community's hierarchy had been established. Mining company employees were first class citizens and everyone else was a second-class citizen. At least that's how non-mine workers perceived it.

With respect to the planning and development of Elliot Lake, four individuals were charged with this responsibility. Jack Carter, a provincial government bureaucrat from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and three members of the provincially appointed Improvement District board of trustees had complete control over Elliot Lake's administrative, legal, and planning issues. Formed in October 1955, the Improvement District's first board of trustees was comprised of Elliot Lake's founder, Franc Joubin; Bert Willoughby, director of Denison Mines; and Earl Gillanders, managing director of Rio Algom. All three represented mining interests and the mines' supremacy within the community was solidified.[13] These men became Elliot Lake's municipal authorities and governed the community's development from the comforts of their Toronto offices.

For two critical years, Elliot Lake's growth was governed from afar. Then in 1957, after the first board of trustees resigned, a resident board was formed. This time the board was comprised of two mining interests and one businessman. Virtually overnight the urgency of the board's decisions escalated and a tenuous relationship with Jack Carter, who continued to reside in Toronto, quickly formed. Described as hard-headed and independent, Jack Carter was the supreme authority (Taylor, 1973; Dixon, 2002). Carter approved every decision and scrutinized the actions of the board of trustees.

On one visit to Elliot Lake, Carter was enraged to learn that the board of trustees had allowed a construction camp to illegally situate itself on municipal land. "They must get out of there!" he demanded and ordered the camp's water line cut (Dixon, 1996, p. 159). Haphazard development would not be tolerated. It was forced to give way to the orderly implementation of the community's master plan. And the resident board was given the tough job of ordering their neighbours to vacate the premises. But the board of trustees did not always obey Carter's orders. This was evidenced by the board's decision to intentionally ignore Carter's instructions that their meetings be open to the public for an entire year.

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[13] According to Robinson (1962), zero representation from the non-mining community was an unusual occurrence among Improvement District boards. Typically, one member was a "local non-company employee" while another was a local, company employee with a company executive serving as chair (p. 48).

Yet despite the miners' desire for mobility, the tight controls imposed by bureaucrats and mine managers in Toronto, and the "uncoordinated attack" of numerous sub-contractors building a community in the span of less than three years, Elliot Lake grew into a remarkably picturesque, well-planned community. In 1954 there was nothing but grandiose dreams and miles of bush. By 1956 a small community of 3000 had been carved out of the Canadian Shield and by 1959 Elliot Lake was home to over 25 000. Development that should have taken fifteen years had been condensed into three (Young, 1980).

Curvilinear streets connected three semi-independent neighbourhoods, complete with their own schools, churches, and mini-shopping centres, to one centralized commercial district. Community amenities, including the hospital, high school, community hall, and municipal buildings, were constructed in attractive sites surrounded by greenbelts overlooking the lakes below. The periphery of two scenic lakes, which hemmed Elliot Lake's development, was reserved for public parkland that many years later became home to public beaches and multi-use trails. It was a metropolitan suburb transplanted to the north, which lacked the social and recreation amenities available in other areas since these were issues that were not adequately addressed by the provincial authorities or the mining companies (Leadbeater, 1998b). Suburbs in the South had these amenities, so why didn't Elliot Lake? One need look no farther than the values and philosophies of Elliot Lake's founding fathers for the answer to this question.

To help achieve their goal of maximizing shareholder value, mine management at Rio Algom and Denison Mines recognized the value of employing healthy, happy miners. They looked after their own. This led to the formation of several townsites adjacent to mines hidden throughout the municipality's bounds and distant from the central community. An attempt to form a single entity responsible for the coordination of recreational activities throughout the community was quickly overtaken by the formation of recreation associations at each mine site, which were funded through employee payroll deductions (Dixon, 1996).

Similarly, an attempt to build a strong and prosperous curling rink in the central townsite ended in failure for the same reason that a central recreation association had. After receiving verbal confirmation from the mining companies for a substantial contribution towards the construction of the proposed curling rink, a group of anxious curlers sold memberships and hired a local contractor to construct the rink. Around the same time, the recreation associations at each of the four mine sites decided to build their own curling rinks. Over the course of a few short months, the Elliot Lake

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area went from not having a curling rink to being home to five of them. In light of this rash of curling rink developments, the mining companies' previous financial commitments to a curling rink in the central community were rescinded. Unable to anticipate this shortfall in funds, the fundraising committee could not pay the contractor for his work, forcing him to declare bankruptcy. Eventually Dension Mines' recreation association purchased the rink located in the central community, thus enabling non-mining employees to enjoy the sport of curling as well (Dixon, 1996).

Neither Franc Joubin nor Stephen Roman demonstrated a strong desire to ensure that Elliot Lake's citizenry, particularly its entrepreneurs and government workers, enjoyed the use of community amenities and facilities. Joubin and Hirshhorn's largest community contribution was their donation of a multi-purpose community hall. True to form, they structured the facility's financing in such a way that it could be used as a tax-write off. The community hall was devoid of furnishings and proper landscaping when the municipality assumed ownership of the building (Dixon, 1996).

Joubin's only other notable personal contribution to the community during its development phase was a thousand dollar donation used to purchase an abandoned one-room school to house the community's first library. For the first few years, the library relied on book donations and volunteer labour. Over time the municipality slowly committed financial resources to this vital public institution.

For the first five years of the nascent community's life it generated millions in profits for both Rio Algom and Denison Mines. Virtually overnight the development single-handedly transformed Joubin and Roman into multi-millionaires. Elliot Lake's uranium mines were their crowning achievement, yet their financial, personal and moral commitment to the community would be described by some, as cold, calculated and removed. In the eyes of one local historian, Catherine Dixon, Elliot Lake's forefathers had abandoned their children and felt no remorse.

From Model City to Ghost Town

The government's own commitment to the model community began to wane as it lost confidence in the renewal of Canada's contracts with the United States military beyond 1963. The "five-year phobia", as Joubin called it, set in and the government began to back-peddle on its previous proclamation that Elliot Lake's future was secure with uranium mining. The Feds were the first to relinquish their support. In 1958, Jack Carter traveled to Elliot Lake to relay the message that the

federal government was unwilling to commit any more money to Elliot Lake given the likelihood that Canada's uranium contracts would not be renewed.

On November 6, 1959 the dreaded announcement was made. As of 1963, all of the United States' uranium requirements would be met domestically. Between 1960 and 1966 the community spiralled from being a bustling, booming city of 25 000 to an unkempt 'has-been' mining town of 6600.

Realizing that Elliot Lake was nothing more than a glorified mining camp, transient miners, with their pick and packsack in hand, left the 'suburbia of the north' and never looked back. At that time, mining jobs were high paid but short in duration. It was the industry norm. Miners accepted the realities of their profession, but the "camp followers" could not.

Entrepreneurs stood to lose their life savings. Service providers shook their head in disbelief. 'What had happened to the uranium boom that was supposed to last a lifetime?' they asked. It had turned out to be nothing but smoke and mirrors. And, according to some residents in Elliot Lake, the government was to blame.

Jack Wellard, a prominent businessman and Improvement District trustee, encapsulated the thoughts on the minds of those left behind when he was quoted as saying, "the heavy investment by the two governments convinced businessmen that nothing could go wrong. We entered Elliot Lake with the faith of the future." (Sudbury Star, August 31, 1956).

Critiqued by some as "fair-weather capitalists" (Varela, 1960), those left behind in Canada's most handsome ghost town demanded accountability from the government. There was a feeling among some residents that 'they got us into this situation, so they are going to get us out'. Lobby groups formed and the protests began.

An act of political protest that generated a great deal of publicity and praise came from a group of 150 women who travelled to Ottawa where they protested on Parliament Hill. Prime Minister Diefenbaker was sympathic, but immediate action wasn't forthcoming. He promised to send a fact-finding committee to the community to "investigate the economic situation" (Young, 1980, p. 55).

Affectionately known as "Mr. Elliot Lake", Jack Gauthier, a local resident, formed an Industrial Advisory Committee with a mandate to stabilize the community's economy. Despite being comprised of civic leaders from a breadth of sectors, community involvement was not as strong as it could have been. In an interview with a local newspaper reporter, Gauthier pleaded with the wider

community to get involved. "Don't leave a few to do all the work," he lamented (The Standard, April 10, 1963). Even Joubin noted Gauthier's unrelenting commitment to civic leadership in his autobiography when he called Mr. Elliot Lake a "veritable one-man Chamber of Commerce" (Joubin & Smyth, 1986, p. 256).

Civic apathy, however, did not stop the Industrial Advisory Committee from securing government aid in the form of stop-gap measures. Elliot Lake became home to a prison farm. The inmates were responsible for constructing the area's ski hill and trail systems as the community strove to become an attractive tourist destination. Furthering this goal, the government committed to funding a local museum, establishing a provincial park a few miles from town, and constructing what was hailed as the Banff School of Arts' eastern Canadian counterpart. Named the Elliot Lake Centre for Continuing Education it was a retraining centre and school of the arts rolled into one. It was also another paternalistic initiative on the part of government that reinforced the citizen apathy toward the ownership of their community. The Centre's first board of directors did not have a single resident representative. This action directly conflicted with the government's desire to have the citizenry "organize and promote the project" themselves, which was clearly communicated at project's outset (Dixon, 1996, p. 235).

Despite the women's protest on Parliament Hill and the efforts of Jack Gauthier, Elliot Lake's saving grace was the elevation of Lester B. Pearson from Leader of the Opposition to Prime Minister of Canada in 1963. Pearson was also Elliot Lake's Member of Parliament. Setting his personal distain for nuclear weaponry aside, Pearson instituted a stockpiling program, which ran from 1963 to 1970. Initially, he organized a stretch-out of deliveries to the United States and Britain until 1966. This slowed down the rate of extraction and prevented the closure of Elliot Lake's four remaining mines.

This, however, was not the most profitable solution for the mining companies. A quick rate of extraction followed by mine closures would have maximized shareholder wealth. Realizing this, Roman's initial reaction to Pearson's program was to close his mining operations in Elliot Lake. It was his board of directors who persuaded the mining magnate to honour Pearson's pledge to save Elliot Lake. In an interview with Dean Walker of the Executive, Stephen Roman admitted, "had I not been thinking about the continuity of Elliot Lake, the mine would have been closed" (1979, p. 59). For the meantime, Elliot Lake avoided joining Canada's long list of ghost towns. And the two

mining companies operating in the Elliot Lake area continued to net profit, even during the toughest of times.

It was during this time that Gauthier's Chamber of Commerce and the Ratepayers Association implored the provincial government to disband the Improvement District and incorporate the Township of Elliot Lake. In 1966, the municipality's chief administrative officer was instructed to prepare for the community's first municipal election. Defeating a member of the board of trustees, Dr. Charles Stewart was elected Reeve. The doctor along with a homemaker, a teacher, a mine accountant, and a service station owner formed Elliot Lake's first council. As the municipality struggled to cope with a mounting debt load, a shrinking tax base and a long wish list of much needed community improvements, the new council was filled with envy as the mines continued to turn a profit.

The "Uranium Capital of the World" on Top Again

Although military use of uranium had waned by the mid-1960s, the Canadian Atomic Energy Board was optimistic that uranium would become the fuel of choice in electric generating stations throughout the world. By 1967, a glut of uranium on the world market was transformed into a scarcity. Consequently, in 1968, the town hosted the biggest controlled staking rush in Canada's history (Young, 1980). Once again Elliot Lake was prospering. In 1965 the Canada Housing & Mortgage Corporation owned half of the housing units in Elliot Lake. Just three years later, CHMC was struggling to find homes for the mass influx of miners.

Rio Algom and Denison Mines began signing contracts with a consortium of Japanese power utilities, the Atomic Energy Authority of the United Kingdom, Tennessee Valley Authority, and Ontario Hydro in the late 1960s. By 1970, Elliot Lake accounted for 80% of Canada's total uranium output (Dixon, 1996). After signing extensive, long-term contracts with Ontario Hydro in 1977, Denison and Rio Algom were forced to expand their mining operations.

Virtually overnight pessimism for the future of uranium was replaced by optimism as "miners were promised jobs for the rest of their lives" (Heard, 1999, p. 27). Concerns about economic diversification quickly gave way to anxiety about housing and infrastructure expansions. Elliot Lake boomed just as quickly as it busted.

It was the 1970s. The price of uranium was skyrocketing (thanks in part to a uranium cartel). Sales were at an all time high. And Elliot Lake was once again focused on the provision of top-quality municipal infrastructure and housing.

Expansions in residential neighbourhoods got underway, while plans for a new subdivision were crafted in joint partnership between the mining companies and the provincial crown-corporation of Ontario Hydro. New housing was built to accommodate mine employees. Reminiscent of the first boom period, there was very little available for non-miners.

By 1980, the municipality had invested $30 million in new sewage and water treatment plants; a private developer had constructed a $7 million mall complex; and the mining companies had invested $60 million in housing developments. By 1981, over 50% of employment stemmed from the mines. Elliot Lake had taken the meaning of 'single-industry' community to new levels (Leadbeater, 1998a). In the span of five years the population had grown by 96%.

The End of an Era

But Elliot Lake was not destined for stability. As quickly as the price of uranium rose, it fell. Sources of higher-grade ore were coming on stream. Production costs for Elliot Lake's mines were rising. This led, in the late 1980s, to several contract cancellations and the scaling back of purchase agreements. Ontario Hydro soon became the mines' major lifeline. But it wouldn't be long before Ontario Hydro would also grow tired of paying too much money for too much ore.

The writing was on the wall. In 1987, headlines in the local newspaper forewarned residents that two of the community's four mines would be forced to close in 1991 if no new contracts were secured. Houses in the new subdivision remained empty while portable homes at mine sites were trucked away. Miners were no longer given turkeys at Christmas time (Dixon, 1996). The signs were there. But neither the mining companies nor the provincial government felt compelled to directly communicate the precarious state of Ontario Hydro's long-term contracts to Elliot Lake's citizenry until after the contracts' termination date had been renegotiated from 2012 to 1992.

Alarmed by these developments, Elliot Lake's third mayor, who was a mine employee and staunch union supporter, began to talk about diversifying the economic base and attracting a second industry in the late 1980s. To this end, the municipality secured government money for the creation of an economic development office and established a volunteer Economic Development Committee. They commissioned a study to investigate tourism opportunities. A joint Retirement Living initiative

between the mining companies and the municipality was struck, giving birth to the community's affordable rental program for seniors relocating from other communities.

But not everyone was prepared to accept another downturn in Elliot Lake's economy. Miners, merchants, and service providers were confident that new contracts would be secured since the community had just undergone an unprecedented expansion. This sentiment was expressed by the union spokesperson for Elliot Lake's 4500 miners when he said, "the union realizes uranium reserves are dwindling. But by 1991, when Rio Algom's contracts expire, the company will have found new customers. There's no point in dwelling on doom and gloom three or four years down the road." (London Free Press, March 22, 1988). Unlike in Atikokan, Elliot Lake never had the luxury of an 8-year buffer between the announcement and the actual closure.

The end of an era was immediate and massive. During the first two years of the 1990s, 3000 mining jobs were eradicated (Heard, 1992) and a thousand more rested on the chopping block. Falling prices and high production costs were to blame.

The first announcement came in January 1990. Rio Algom prepared to close two of its three mines. One month later, Denison Mines followed suit with the announcement that it was downsizing. Ontario Hydro became the mines' sole customer. But even that was short lived.

After failing to reach an agreement on price, Ontario Hydro announced that it would no longer purchase uranium from Elliot Lake as of 1992. With that announcement, Denison Mines' remaining employees were laid off in 1992. Ontario Hydro agreed to continue to purchase uranium from Elliot Lake to keep one mine operational until 1996 in order to give the community time to diversify and stabilize its economy. This gave five hundred of Rio Algom's most senior miners a five-year reprieve from the anguish and desperation felt by their former co-workers.

The impact on the community was instantaneous. Elliot Lake experienced the largest decline in population of any small municipality in Canada between 1986 and 1991, falling from 18 000 to 14 000 people. In 1991, Elliot Lake had the highest level of consumer bankruptcy in Canada (Leadbeater, 1998b). Marginal businesses boarded up their shop doors. Many parent companies, from the comforts of their corporate head offices in the south, closed their branch operations in Elliot Lake. Mining supply companies found new markets, adopted a new product line, or closed. Some government offices relocated to other more prosperous communities. As a by-product of the

mine layoffs, 850 service sector jobs vanished. Most of Elliot Lake's well-established family businesses weathered the tough economic times. But it was far from easy.

With employee adjustment programs, severance packages, and Employment Insurance benefits for the displaced miners, it was the business community that stood to lose the most. As a result, "the local business community became the most committed and highly motivated group in the restructuring of the local economy" (Berthelot, 1999, p. 234). Just as it had happened in the 1960s bust, it was the business community who led Elliot Lake's economic restructuring process.

Strong leadership from the recently elected Mayor, George Farkouh, who owned a successful vehicle dealership, helped to elevate the business community's involvement in the diversification of Elliot Lake's economic base. Farkouh not only stood to lose his business; he also stood to lose his reputation as elected leader of the community. Exuding unprecedented tenacity and dogged determination, Farkouh would stop at nothing to achieve his goal of securing a future for the community.

Criticized heavily by the working class as looking after their own interests by focusing on the survival of the community's economic base and instead of creating replacement jobs for displaced miners, the business class made no apologies for its approach. In explaining the community's redevelopment approach to displaced miners, one businessman said, "Please try to understand that it is not our job, not our role, to take care of the people who have lost their jobs. There are other organizations for that. Our job is the future of the community. In order to ensure the future of the community our job is to stimulate economic activity; to put things in place that will create an atmosphere conducive to growth of businesses and activities."[14]

This sentiment reinforced Elliot Lake's long-standing civic tradition of 'looking after your own'. Since the community's inception, the mining companies had looked after their managers and miners before everyone else. The business community learned to do the same. David Leadbeater, a university professor who studied the impact of massive layoffs on Elliot Lake and its miners, described Elliot Lake as having a tradition of "consumerism and individualism" in his analysis of the community (1998a, p. 38). Stark divisions existed between the mining and business communities, which were further tainted by some local entrepreneurs who envied the miners' higher wages,

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[14] This statement was made by one of my Elliot Lake participants during our interview.

healthy benefit packages, and adjustment assistance (Leaderbeater, 1998b). This left some feeling "little sympathy" towards the workers when the mass layoffs occurred (Leadbeater, 1998b, p. 30).

Elliot Lake's civic culture was pervasive. Those directly involved in the economic transition process fervently believed they executed an open, inclusive process, while those on the periphery felt the process was controlled by a handful of business elites and implemented in a top-down undemocratic manner. Despite this colossal discrepancy, everyone agrees that Elliot Lake has a strong fighting spirit. Throughout the 1990s, hundreds of Elliot Lakers demonstrated indomitable energy, tenacity and determination in its fight to save the community. Blow by blow, the local newspaper documented the infighting among those engaged in the process and provided a soapbox from which the 'disenfranchised' could hurl scathing accusations toward the 'power brokers'. Elliot Lake arose from these tumultuous times to become hailed as one of Canada's community economic development success stories. Once again the community evaded a quick death, thanks to the government's heavy helping hand, strong civic leadership, and passion for survival.

The Ultimate Makeover: From Uranium City to Retirement Destination

Elliot Lake's redevelopment began with a plan, crafted by the same Toronto-based consulting firm employed to engineer the community's 1950s land-use development. Commissioned before the mine closure announcements, Marshall Macklin Monaghan (MMM) Limited utilized the latest in participatory planning techniques to garner citizen input regarding the future of Elliot Lake. The five-year economic development strategy was adopted by Council just months after the first closure announcements were made. Elliot Lake's civic leaders began to masterfully execute this plan.

The plan encouraged the community to focus its efforts on implementing three strategies: retirement living; training and support services; and business retention and expansion. After a series of ineffectual and confrontational economic development officers, Elliot Lake finally hired a competent, hard-working and tenacious individual to lead the coordination and implementation of the community's economic development strategy. Using the MMM Ltd. plan as a guide, Dianna Bratina developed eight short-term goals adding tourism and centre for arts and culture to the list of diversification areas.

MMM Ltd. indicated that the strategy's success would hinge upon a number of key factors. First, the community must achieve an attitudinal shift from employee culture to an entrepreneurial culture. This was going to be a difficult 'key success factor' to achieve given that Elliot Lake had the lowest

levels of self-employment and home-based businesses in Canada throughout the early 1990s (Leadbeater, 1998b).

Second, diversification initiatives must lead to permanent job creation. Unfortunately, despite employment growth in not-for-profit organizations and the public sector primarily arising from service needs of seniors, "there has been no major private sector diversification or recovery yielding substantial numbers of long-term jobs" (Leadbeater, 1998a, p. 36). Today the community's largest private employer is an etched glass manufacturer that has grown to employ approximately 50 people. The community's second largest private employer is the local newspaper. With a participation rate of 38% (67% Ontario average) and 13% unemployment rate (6% Ontario average) in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2001), long-term job creation has not been one of Elliot Lake's numerous crowning achievements.

Third, MMM Ltd. cautioned that Elliot Lake's economic future "cannot hinge on the replacement of one major employer by another major employer" (Marshall Macklin Monaghan, 1990, p. 4-5). By 1996, 4000 senior citizens had made Elliot Lake their home. This equalled the number of mining jobs lost between 1990 and 1996. Within the span of a few years Elliot Lake had transformed itself into a beautiful, safe, and serene retirement community from a boom-bust, rough and tumble centre for uranium extraction. It was a masterfully executed marketing strategy that brought retirees in by the droves, curious to learn more about the outrageously affordable, full-service community carved out of the majestic Canadian Shield.

The idea of selling the mines' unused housing stock, slated for demolition, to retirees was spawned in 1987. Claire Dimock, a long-time resident, councillor, and senior executive responsible for community relations and housing at one of the mines, had been saddled with the responsibility of eradicating the mine's housing burden and this was her solution. After placing ads in the newspapers of a few Southern Ontario cities, within six months 38 retirees had relocated to Elliot Lake. The smell of success prompted the community's civic leaders to invest tremendous amount of energy and government money into transforming Elliot Lake into a retirement destination.

The Retirement Living Program was formed as a non-profit, community-owned organization that rented thousands of housing units to retirees and senior citizens. The program was promoted on television and radio and in newspapers and magazines across Canada. A Retirement Living fifth wheel trailer travelled from community to community in Southern Ontario espousing the virtues of

retired life in Elliot Lake. Interested retirees were given a free weekend excursion to investigate their potential new home. By 1995 Retirement Living had become a $6-million-a-year business (Lowe, 1999).

The program's success encouraged ambitious entrepreneurs to try their hand at marketing Elliot Lake's real estate to retirees. Active Living, a private company owned by a Toronto-based entrepreneur, was formed after the mining companies and the municipality agreed to sell 600 housing units for $9000 a piece. After renovating the units, Active Living targeted seniors looking for affordable homes. Modern, recently renovated homes sold for the incredible price of $19 900. Active Living was an instant success and it left many Elliot Lakers wondering why the municipality or a local entrepreneur had not capitalized on this lucrative opportunity.

In addition to the marketing efforts of Retirement Living and Active Living, the municipality also hired a Toronto-based public relations firm to promote Elliot Lake's new image as a dynamic full-service community catering to the needs of seniors, artists, entrepreneurs, and tourists. The firm enticed Bob & Wayne Izumi of the "Real Fishing with Bob Izumi" television program to shoot a segment in the pristine lakes surrounding Elliot Lake. When the Izumi brothers arrived, they quickly learned about Elliot Lake's budding retirement community. By the time they left the community, they owned 170 townhouses in exchange for $1 million worth of "free" advertising for the community on their program.

No one can deny the tremendous success of Elliot Lake's retirement industry. It softened the economic blow of the mine closures. It put money in the municipality's coffers. It stemmed the community's population decline. But it did not result in the creation of high-paying, permanent employment for many. Fixed income earners have replaced employees. An entrepreneurial culture was never fostered. And, perhaps most importantly, Elliot Lake continues to be a single industry community. Boom and bust cycles have been replaced by a continual flow of new residents replacing former residents as they pass on or move away.

An unintended and undesirable by-product of the community's successful promotion of low-cost housing has been an influx of low-income earners and families chronically reliant on government assistance. Elliot Lake was once home to Canada's highest paid workers. In the 1990s, its average household income was approximately $10 000 lower than the Canadian average while the percentage of families living in poverty had risen above the Canadian average (Leadbeater, 1998b).

There is no doubt that Retirement Living has had a major influence on the development and direction of Elliot Lake. It represents Elliot Lake's largest constituency – seniors. Its political influence is obvious and often subject to criticism from ex-miners.

Retirement Living's empire continues to expand. In 1997, Retirement Living formed a private for-profit corporation, NorDev, which began purchasing properties throughout the community. NorDev's reach expanded beyond seniors to include tourists as well. Most notably, it assumed ownership of the mall/hotel complex and subsequently transformed it into a senior/tourist-friendly environment. Then they purchased Stephen Roman's mansion with the intent of transforming it into a conference centre. In partnership with the City of Elliot Lake, NorDev also organizes the community's annual Drag Race festivities. Focused on filling its hotel beds and ensuring its mall merchants pay their rent, NorDev has become Elliot Lake's leader in creating economic development opportunities, for the betterment of the community and for its own bottom-line.

Yet none of this would have been realized without the unfailing leadership of the Mayor (criticized by some for being autocratic) and a $250 million government handout. Within months of the first layoff announcement, the Mayor took two resounding actions to kick-start the redevelopment process. He handpicked representatives from the mining companies, the union, and business community to prepare a proposal of fourteen diversification projects that the community wished to pursue. Amidst this process, a select group of forty citizens were invited to attend a weekend 'think tank' where ideas for saving the community were discussed (Dixon, 1996). Guided by MMM Ltd.'s economic development strategy and ideas raised at the 'think tank', a brief was drafted and circulated to provincial cabinet members for their review. Reminiscent of the 1950s planning and development phase, the provincial government was once again left with the responsibility of determining Elliot Lake's future.

The government responded. In March 1991, the recently elected NDP government announced that it was prepared to disburse a hefty aid package. Leo Gerard, a stalwart NDP supporter and representative for the local Steelworkers union, was instrumental in upping the government's ante to the tune of $250 million. The government required that $9.5 million be used for short-term job creation with the purpose of extending displaced worker's Employment Insurance benefits while another $165 million was to be used to keep one of the mines operating until 1996, thereby sparing

500 jobs. Deciding how the remaining millions would be spent was left to the discretion of a regionally based committee.

"No group had more power to effect change and indicate a new direction for Elliot Lake than the Area Working Group did," (1996, p. 373) Catherine Dixon reflected during her recount of Elliot Lake's diversification process in her book The Power and the Promise: The Elliot Lake Story. The Area Working Group was comprised of government bureaucrats; municipal leaders from the five area communities; and representatives from business, labour and education. One of George Farkouh's councillors accused him of trying to be God when he announced that he would serve as Elliot Lake's representative on the regional committee (Young, 1997, p. 52).

But Elliot Lake's Mayor, who has recently embarked on his fifth consecutive term, has always been strong on ensuring that the community "sing from the same song sheet, with one theme, with one message" (Farkouh qtd. in Northern Ontario Business, 1990, p. A-5). But tight adherence to the community's economic renewal strategy came at a cost. The majority of Elliot Lake's citizens felt excluded from the process, despite frequent 'town hall' meetings where citizen comment was invited. In the eyes of the disenchanted, the purpose of those public meetings was to "inform citizens of what had already been decided by the power brokers" (Dixon, 1996, p. 374).

In the case of the appointed Area Working Group, no public meetings were ever called. Their challenge was to decide how the remaining millions ought to be spent to ensure the entire region reaped economic benefits. This was not an easy task for representatives from a group of well-established villages that envied Elliot Lake' stature in the region. The existing communities along the north shore of Lake Huron had never welcomed Elliot Lake, the new kid on the block. Many felt life would have been just as good had the "Uranium Capital of the World" never been developed. This made for strained committee relations.

Despite their internal struggles, the committee finally agreed to retire the communities' debts; square away several million for the establishment of a hydro-electric generating station which promised to bring 1600 jobs to the region; and create a $65 million fund to be spent on various economic development projects throughout Elliot Lake and the region. Deciding how this $65 million would be spent required yet another 'think tank' session in Sault Ste. Marie by invitation only. With 80 people in attendance, the "power brokers" decided to invest $23 million into the formation of a

business development and lending institution. Unfortunately, the organization was never successful in assisting lasting businesses. Few permanent jobs ever resulted from development efforts. It also became mired in controversy and scandal when a group of 'watch dog' citizens discovered that one of the organization's senior executives had engaged in fraudulent activity. In the eyes of many, the organization had frittered away millions of dollars.

Yet the rest of the NDP's aid money, along with $15 million given by the Liberal government in 1990 just before it was ousted from office, was invested into successful capital development projects. It gave Retirement Living investment capital to renovate thousands of housing units and to market the program. It led to the creation of a residential treatment centre for abusers of drugs and alcohol and provided Elliot Lake money to invest in beautification and infrastructure improvements for the benefit of tourists and retirees. Two post-secondary institutions were formed (one has subsequently closed).

However, money does not necessarily translate into jobs. Within months of giving Elliot Lake its aid package, the NDP government discovered it had inherited a $17 billion deficit from the previous government. As such, the government could not deliver on its promise to build a hydroelectric generating station or establish a mining reclamation centre. Hundreds of potential jobs from these initiatives were lost. Today, service industries and government employment keep Elliot Lake's employment base alive.

Nevertheless, Elliot Lake's mere survival is a miracle that can be credited to strong civic leadership, healthy government handouts, and the business community's fighting spirit. By 1996, civic leaders had declared an end to the crisis. The population had all but stabilized and the community was ready to embark on an era of growth, development and stability.

However, nearly 10 years later, some believe the crisis is just beginning. The aid money has been spent. The community is virtually devoid of residents in their twenties and thirties. Private sector employment is scarce. Earned income primarily stems from public sector coffers. Residents carry 80% of the municipal tax burden, while the mining companies' contribution to the municipal tax base has dwindled from 51% in 1990 to virtually nothing. Many citizens continue to believe that 'someone owes them a living'. With no mining companies to blame, today the municipality and provincial government shoulder the burden of sustaining Elliot Lake. In spite of these obstacles,

Elliot Lake's cadre of civic leaders, over the course of a decade, have transformed this former mining town into a breathtakingly picturesque destination for seniors and tourists with modern seniors facilities and programs; extensive multi-use trail systems; cottage lot development on several area lakes; and proposed golf course and ski hill expansions.

Communities are never static. And no community exemplifies this more than Elliot Lake. Approximately 60% of its current population arrived after 1990. And with the influx of over 6000 seniors, Elliot Lake's civic tradition is morphing more quickly than it would have had the retirement program never germinated. Offering fresh ideas and new talents, seniors have slowly begun to assume ownership over their new home (despite many residing in rental units). Each brings his/her own civic traditions to the community. But the power of Elliot Lake's civic culture must not be underestimated. Just as new residents influence Elliot Lake's civic tradition, Elliot Lake's collective culture sways the actions and behaviours of its newcomers. With a new economic base, built on retirement living and tourism, the story of Elliot Lake isn't over; it is only just beginning.

3.4   Retracing the Past

Atikokan and Elliot Lake have both been hailed as economic redevelopment success stories. For a period of time, both communities lost their raison d'etre with the permanent closure of their mines. Government intervention coupled with an insatiable desire to survive enabled both Atikokan and Elliot Lake to build a new economy.

Despite these similarities, Atikokan's and Elliot Lake's paths of economic and social development bore little resemblance to one another. Atikokan's history spans the entire 20th century, while Elliot Lake's is only half that length. In Atikokan, it was the company, as opposed to the provincial government, which was the authority responsible for Atikokan's initial planning and development. Steep Rock Iron Mines was a 'resource rich, cash poor' Canadian-owned company with its headquarters in Atikokan. Its top executives not only lived in the community; they also actively participated in civic affairs. It is well-documented that Atikokan's long-term economic and social well-being was high on SRIM's list of priorities.

The mining companies in Elliot Lake, on the other hand, were multi-national conglomerates headquartered in Toronto and abroad. Elliot Lake was a profit centre, not a home, to these mining

magnates whose main priority was uranium extraction and production, not the social and economic development of Elliot Lake. Entrepreneurs and service sector workers, who flocked to Elliot Lake in the first few years of its existence, were quickly made to feel like second-class citizens. Officially, however, it was the provincial government's responsibility to plan and control Elliot Lake's development. According to the master plan, Elliot Lake was supposed to be a model, permanent community. Instead it grew to be nothing more than a mining town created for and by miners, at least until the mines closed in the early 1990s.

When the mines closed in Atikokan and Elliot Lake onlookers were certain the end was near. But its citizens and the government weren't convinced. Both communities engaged in successful redevelopment processes, with a few key differences. Government intervention came in the form of jobs in Atikokan and money in Elliot Lake. Creating employment opportunities for ex-miners interested in changing careers was the focus of Atikokan's redevelopment. This contrasts with Elliot Lake's diversification strategy, which centred on preserving Elliot Lake's tax base and business community. A final key difference between the two communities was the structure of their planning process. An open, participatory planning process was pursued in Elliot Lake, while Atikokan's redevelopment took place behind closed doors. Yet groups of citizens in both communities felt excluded and disenfranchised; they felt the process had been controlled by an insular group of elites.

To anyone who has resided in both communities the most notable difference between these two towns is their disparate social fabrics. This chapter has described the confluence of factors at play during the formation of the communities' civic tradition and the trying economic times that tested the "tensile strength" of those traditions. The following chapter is a thorough investigation into the causes and nature of Atikokan and Elliot Lake's dissimilar civic traditions.

CHAPTER 4: THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK. THE APPROACH. THE ANALYSIS.

This chapter takes the knowledge acquired in Chapter 3 and analyzes the development histories of my hometowns through the lens of social capital. It begins by locating this analysis within an analytical framework. The foundation of this framework stems from Jan Flora's model of assessing community collective action. After this discussion of my research approach, I will delve into a presentation my research findings.

4.1   Studying the Collective from the Individual's Perspective

Social capital is an illusive, yet pervasive concept, which is difficult to measure. Social capital scholars have invested millions of dollars and dedicated hundreds of hours to the development of precise, quantifiable means of tracking social capital's ebb and flow. However, precise measures continue to evade scholars in view of the fact that social capital is intangible. Although social capital is the oil that lubricates society, the analogy is a tenuous one since oil is easily identified and measured using our five senses. It is not possible to taste, touch, smell, see or hear the dimensions of social capital. The complexities of social networks, along with the atmosphere of trust and norms established to enhance and support these interactions, are not fully detectable by our senses, although the benefits and outcomes of social capital are more easily identifiable.

In addition to social capital's inability to manifest itself in a tactile form, the assessment of the concept is further complicated by the fact that it is beyond the control of any one individual. It inheres in the structure of relations (Coleman, 1990). Although it is produced through the individual actions of many, the outcome of social capital is characteristic of ecological functions where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Therefore, in my opinion, asking individuals to assess social capital's presence and aggregating their responses is an inherently flawed means of measuring social capital. Just as ecologists examine entire ecosystems to understand the interactions of species and the impact their interactions have on the world, social capitalists must examine the inter-workings of entire social systems.

Social capital is formed through the interactions among individuals/groups. When studying social capital, the whole does not always equate to the sum of its parts. As such, Deitland Stolle & Thomas Rochon (1998) believe that social capital should be measured on a collective scale since it is a

collective resource. When I developed my research approach, I did not heed Stolle & Rochon's advice. While transforming individual responses into a statement about the collective is an inherently flawed means of measuring community-wide social capital, developing means of assessing social capital on a collective scale is not easy. It wasn't a challenge that I was willing to tackle for this thesis.

Instead, I asked each of my research participants to individually offer their impressions of the community's ability to resolve collective action problems. My research approach invited individuals to reflect on the activities and behaviours of the collective. It stemmed from Jan Flora's entrepreneurial social infrastructure model of measuring community-wide social capital. Flora's model builds on many of the concepts espoused by social capital researchers and attempts to redress the shortcomings of numerous measures that assume collective action is the aggregate of individual actions.

Disillusioned with the misuse and overuse of the term 'social capital', Flora and his colleagues developed a new concept, entrepreneurial social infrastructure (ESI), which encapsulates a set of concepts and indicators that address and assess a community's ability to solve problems collectively. Flora interprets social capital to be a feature of social organization (characterized by trust, reciprocity, social norms, etc) that facilitates cooperation for mutual benefit. Social capital is the enabling 'agent' of collective community action. Where trust, social norms, and networks are lacking, so is the achievement of beneficial community outcomes. Given this interpretation, social capital is a necessary component of ESI, but it is not sufficient in and of itself (Flora et al, 1997; Flora, 1998).

The terminology, whether it is entrepreneurial social infrastructure or social capital, is not as important as Flora's conceptual model of community collective action and its associated measures. Flora's work defined my research inquiry. His model is based on three social structures: i) legitimacy of alternatives ii) mobilization of diverse resources iii) network qualities.

'Legitimacy of alternatives' pertains to a community's acceptance and respect for multiple points of view and is characterized by acceptance of controversy, depersonalization of politics, and focus on process, not outcome, as the means of achieving collective action. In these communities controversy is accepted, differences of opinion are welcomed and alternative solutions to problems are discussed. These are places where people from a diversity of backgrounds, armed with an array of ideas and

ready to push the boundaries of convention, are appreciated. Likewise, in communities in which politics are depersonalized, people are less likely to experience negative social or career consequences for taking an opposing position and, therefore, may be more likely to enter the community's political arena. Finally, places where people can disagree but still respect one another are often characterized by their emphasis on how, not what, decisions are made. Studying how conflicts are solved and the existence of permanent rifts in a community are effective means of assessing the legitimacy of alternatives presented in a community (Flora et al, 1997; Flora, 1998).

Flora's second construct, 'mobilization of diverse resources', assesses a community's ability to readily access resources within and beyond the community's bounds. In communities where ESI is high, mechanisms for contributing are in place along with social norms that nurture and support giving behaviour. The mobilization of diverse resources is indicated by the willingness of individuals and firms to contribute money, expertise and labour directly to community projects (Flora et al, 1997).

Finally, the third construct of Flora's model examines the quality and diversity of networks within a community. As established in Chapter 2, networks that link people who walk in different circles assist with community collective action as these networks enable information and resources to be dispersed throughout the community. A balance of vertical (linking those of different status) and horizontal (linking those of similar status) networks, characterized as diverse, flexible, and inclusive, are network qualities espoused by communities with high levels of entrepreneurial social infrastructure (Flora, 1998).

Flora's work alone did not inform my research approach. Flora's model did, however, help to structure my analysis of community-wide social capital in Atikokan and Elliot Lake. Embedded within this framework is the work of Mildred Warner, who believes autonomy and linkage are key indicators of community-wide social capital. Building upon Michael Woolcock's discussion of intra and extra community ties, Warner's model focuses on assessing the nature of ties within the community and between the community and its wider regional/provincial interests. She calls this linkage. Assessing a community's autonomy involves examining the structures that facilitate the exchange of information and resources and enable citizens to effectively express their opinions (1999). Warner's approach matches Floras' belief in diversity of ideas, people and networks.

My interview schedule was framed by the work of Flora, Warner, and Woolcock but it was informed by numerous quantitative and qualitative questions gleaned from several research initiatives and adapted to suit my research. Research questions posed by Flora (1998), Rydin & Pennington (2000), Kreuter et al (1998), Putnam (1993, 2000), Duncan (1999) and others were reworked and applied to this study. Questions derived from social capital literature probed into mobilization of and access to resources; presence of social trust and generalized reciprocity; extent and quality of diverse networks; acceptance of controversy and resolution of conflicts; flow of information throughout the community; the extent to which citizens are included/excluded from decision-making processes; and the power dynamics among volunteers.

Investigating power dynamics was the centrepiece of my interview schedule. In addition to assessing the degree of community-wide social capital through a series of qualitative questions, I also inquired about the power dynamics between newcomers and old-timers, between miners and mine managers, between the unemployed and the employed, between the mining industry and the government, and between mining and non-mining sectors. My research participants were also asked to reflect on the power dynamics at play during their community's formative land-use planning process and subsequent economic redevelopment process. They were encouraged to probe into the origins of their community's civic tradition, and were outright asked if their community's civic tradition had any relationship to the nature and structure of its planning processes.

I asked these qualitative, open-ended questions of 32 individuals. Using my social networks, I hand-selected 14 Atikokanites, 18 Elliot Lakers, and 1 non-resident to participate in this study. Despite my hand-selection of citizens actively involved in community life, many references to the importance of leadership were made throughout the course of my interviews, thus diluting my understanding of the community's social networks and structures. During the course of interviewing I realized that investigating the collective through the lens of the individual is subject to one inherent weakness - no matter how thorough the model or how well developed the interview questions, research participants have the tendency to focus on individual as opposed to group behaviour.

Canadian society, greatly influenced by our neighbour to the south, has a growing, ever-present libertarian orientation that overshadows our concept of community. While recognition of the fact that we live in shared cultures dependant on the social structures that surround us continues to be overlooked, the assumption that individual preferences and behaviours are not shaped by

interactions with others gains ground in the hearts and minds of Canadians. At the best of times, the nuances of social capital's processes go unnoticed by communitarians. Add a touch of libertarianism to the mix and the acute appreciation of networks, shared social norms, and the social benefits of working together for the common good are lost. This phenomenon, discussed and brought to the fore by Amitai Etzioni (1996), erodes the efficacy of qualitative measures of social capital. If individuals do not recognize the importance of shared values and collective goals, then their daily brush with social capital is more likely to go unnoticed.

4.2   Mixing Fact with Fiction

In spite of my research approach's aforementioned shortcoming, vibrant stories of Atikokan and Elliot Lake's civic dynamics are woven throughout 500 pages of transcribed qualitative data. I pored over this data in search of common threads that tied the thoughts and perspectives of community members together. I identified patterns of power, of decision-making, of volunteerism, of networks, of trust, and of resource mobilization. This analysis, coupled with knowledge acquired from reading history books, archived materials and Census data, enabled me to develop an understanding of the communities' civic traditions.

I paint this picture through a combination of profiles and narratives describing the people and the processes of planning and civic life. Using their own words, quoting from my 33 interviews, I have allowed people to tell their own stories of the formation, character, pervasiveness, and ebb and flow of their communities' civic traditions. I have created composites of two or three interviewees for the purposes of protecting the identities of my research participants, creating an interesting read, and providing a deeper understanding of my participants' lives and experiences. Together these 9 characters personify civic life in the towns of study representing the entire gamete of opinions, thoughts and feelings expressed by my 33 participants.

To authenticate this reconstructed representation of my findings based on the creation of composite characters derived from real people's lives and experiences, I will first offer a statistical description of my research participants and their communities. Please see Table 2 (on page 69) for a statistical comparison of the communities' population, age structure, fixity, and employment.

Table 2: Statistical Comparison of Atikokan & Elliot Lake

	Atikokan	Elliot Lake	Ontario Average
Demographics			
Residents over Age of 65 in 1996	14%	17%	
Residents over Age of 65 in 2001	15.7%	25%	
Fixity			
Residents with same address in 2001 as had 2000	90%	84.5%	
Residents with same address in 2001 as had in 1996	76.5%	52.7%	
% of homeownership in 2001	85%	55.8%	
Participation & Employment			
1996 Participation Rate	63.5%	46.2%	
2001 Participation Rate	62%	38%	67.3%
1996 Unemployment Rate	13.2%	15.3%	9.1%
2001 Unemployment Rate	11.9%	13%	6%
Employment in Service Sector (1996)	66%	75%	
Employment in Service Sector (2001)	61%	84%	
Employment in Manufacturing (1996)	28%	9.3%	
Employment in Manufacturing (2001)	29%	8%	
Employment in Primary Sector (1996)	6%	14.5%	
Employment in Primary Sector (2001)	10%	7.3%	

Source: Censuses of Canada; City of Elliot Lake; Township of Atikokan

This census data can be compared against demographic and employment information collected from my research participants. Above all, I used my social networks and connections to select research participants who were civic-minded, cared deeply for their community, and demonstrated knowledge of, or involvement in civic affairs. I was less concerned about finding a representative sample. 63% of Elliot Lake's interviewees are male (2001 Census figures indicate that 48% of Elliot Lake's population is male), while the gender balance for Atikokan and for my sample is an even 50/50 split.

I also sought to interview citizens knowledgeable of their communities' development and redevelopment processes. As a result, the median age of my participants (66 in Atikokan and 57 in Elliot Lake) is significantly higher than the communities' median age of 39 and 49, respectively (Statistics Canada, 2001). In Elliot Lake, 15 of 18 participants are long-time residents who have resided in the community for more than 20 years while the remaining three are relative 'newcomers' having lived in the community for less than 13 years. 12 of my 14 Atikokan participants have resided in the community for more than 20 years. The remaining two key informants (a married couple)

have lived in Atikokan for only seven years. They moved from Elliot Lake to Atikokan after residing in the former community for 20 years.

The labour force participation rate among my interviewees is not representative of the communities' actual rate. Only 29% of people interviewed in Atikokan participate in the workforce compared with the community's participation rate of 62% in 2001, while 50% of Elliot Lake's interviewees are still engaged in the workforce (actual participation rate in 2001 was 38%). In the case of Atikokan, my sample's participation rate is low because of the age of my participants - 50% were either involved in Atikokan's formative development (which took place in the late 1940s/early 1950s) or in its economic redevelopment process of the 1970s. My sample's participation rate in Elliot Lake, however, is higher than the community's average because 75% of long-time residents worked in non-mining sectors. As such, they were able to retain employment beyond the mine closures.

Similar to my sample's participation rate, employment by sector is not representative of the communities' average either. 50% of Atikokan's interviewees (or their immediate family) were formerly employed at the mine, compared with only 16% in Elliot Lake. Seven of Elliot Lake's 18 participants were selected for their involvement in the 1990s redevelopment process. Few miners were actively engaged in this process. As such, interviews with ex-miners were not readily sought, thus skewing employment across sectors (prior to the mine closures 50% of Elliot Lake's workforce was employed by the mines). This contrasts with Atikokan where many ex-miners (and their wives) actively engaged in civic affairs, specifically the community's economic redevelopment.

This statistical comparison of Atikokan and Elliot Lake begins to offer some insight into the civic dynamics of the two communities, as women and ex-miners appear to be more actively involved in civic affairs in Atikokan as opposed to Elliot Lake. Moreover, the rate of homeownership, a common indicator of social capital, is significantly higher in Atikokan than Elliot Lake (85% as opposed to 56% in 2001).[15] Another indicator of social capital is longevity of residence. Catherine Campbell & Pamela Gillies (2001) and J.E. Puddifoot (1994) found a direct correlation between social capital, as characterized by sense of belonging and network qualities, and stability of residence. Average residency among Atikokan's participants is eight years longer than Elliot Lake's. Also, the degree of fixity is higher in Atikokan, according to Census 2001 figures. 76% of Atikokanites did not

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[15] For this study, rate of homeownership is not an accurate indicator of social capital as Elliot Lake's homeownership rate is kept artificially low by the Retirement Living Program, which does not allow for the purchase of their rental units.

change addresses between 1996 and 2001, compared with 53% of Elliot Lakers (Statistics Canada, 2001).[16]

4.3   Illustrating Civic Tradition

Statistical analyses offer some insight into the civic dynamics of community. They are an essential component in the assessment of social capital. Yet when probing into the origins of civic tradition, statistical analyses are a woefully inadequate means of pinpointing sources. Only through observing action, reading historical materials, and listening carefully to the thoughts and expressions of community members can insight into the origins of social capital formation be acquired. This is the approach I took to assess community-wide social capital in my two communities of study and to investigate the origins of civic tradition. These are my findings.

Atikokan

Affectionately described as the 'little town that could', Atikokan has a long history of being an exemplar civic community.   Atikokan is known throughout the region for its friendliness and remarkable ability to raise funds for community projects. It is a comfortable place to live. A feeling of safety and freedom coupled with a strong sense of belonging pervades the hearts and minds of its citizens. From the street sweeper to the chief of police, citizens exchange a friendly hello and a few pleasantries as they pass one another on the street. There is a shared perception that everyone knows everyone.

By and large, individuals are accepted and respected in spite of their controversial opinions and differing ideas. Those wishing to express their thoughts and opinions are given ample opportunity to be listened to and heard. Local knowledge is fervently respected, while typically outside experts and intermediaries are treated with suspicion. Local civic leaders have also been subjects of suspicion, accused of engaging in 'closed door' decision-making by their fellow citizens. In spite of this mistrust, it has been the civic leaders' connections to 'mistrusted outsiders' (a.k.a. politicians and senior bureaucrats) that has historically played a vital role in Atikokan's development.

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[16] This assertion that higher levels of social capital are associated with longevity of residence must be tempered by the fact that Elliot Lake underwent an economic overhaul throughout the 1990s. Atikokan's economic transition had taken place 20 years prior. Perhaps in another ten years Elliot Lake's rate of fixity will have risen significantly to levels currently experienced in Atikokan.

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Drivers of community projects often stem from diverse and surprising corners of the community. Generally, social class or vocation does not determine sources of power and influence in Atikokan. Within the community there is a sentiment that anyone can affect change.

The prevalence of bonding and bridging ties is perhaps the best indicator of Atikokan's social capital. Although social circles are often demarcated by invisible bounds of occupation and education, citizens from all walks of life pull together in the wake of tragedy and for the sake of civic projects (particularly projects pertaining to youth). Where you work or how much money you make is of little relevance when people band together to achieve a common objective.

When asked where this civic tradition stems from, research participants offered several answers. Eight key informants felt it stemmed from the mines' relationship to the community. According to these individuals, the mines influenced the civic dynamics through management strategies and personal philosophies of the mine managers. Four others believed Atikokan's civic culture wasn't a result of who moved to the community, but rather where they had grown up. A number of people who migrated to Atikokan in the 1940s and 1950s had previously lived in farming communities. They brought their 'barn raising' civic culture with them and applied it to the social construction of Atikokan's civic tradition. The remaining two participants fleetingly mentioned the positive impact that the instant growth of the town in the 1950s, limited financial resources, and geographic isolation had on the development of Atikokan's civic culture. One common thread connects these diverse responses. According to the majority of my research participants, Atikokan's civic roots were planted in the 1940s and 1950s when the mining development took place. Only one-fifth of my key informants entertained the notion that Atikokan's civic tradition might have been developed by Atikokan's pioneers at the turn of the 20th century.

Meet Gracie Hayward, Armand Stasiak, Peter Russell, and Ginny MacTavish – four upstanding citizens of Atikokan – who will personify my research findings, within the constructs of Flora's analytical framework, in the unfolding pages.[17] Gracie moved to Atikokan in 1951; she arrived by train with her husband, Robert, who had recently landed a job with Steep Rock Iron Mines. After two gruelling days of travel, Gracie and Robert arrived at the train station and were greeted by a

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[17] These composite characters faithfully reflect the actual lives and experiences of my participants. Their socio-economic and demographic profiles have been altered to protect their identities. Italicized words are actual quotes taken from my research participants.

handful of curious onlookers and a sea of red dust. Gracie and Robert, attracted by an enticing SRIM advertisement in the Winnipeg Free Press, had just left their families and their quaint, Manitoban farming community behind in search of a steady pay cheque. The community's severe housing shortage forced Gracie and Robert to board with Robert's third cousin and his burgeoning family of four in a three-bedroom 900 square foot home with no basement. Gracie distinctly remembers pleading with her husband to allow her to take the first train out in the morning. She desperately wanted to return home.

But Gracie never got on that train. She had come to Atikokan just months after graduating from high school and weeks after wedding Robert. Atikokan was her new home. She doesn't remember when or how Atikokan became a part of her heart and soul. This spirited woman from Manitoba grew to become one of Atikokan's most out-spoken and well-respected civic leaders.

Armand Stasiak arrived several years before Gracie at a time when sewer and water were still considered a luxury by many Atikokanites. Since there was nothing tying this young, single, recently displaced machinist to his birthplace of Hamilton (Ontario), he accepted a job with Steep Rock Iron Mines. Armand was appalled to find that Atikokan was comprised of nothing more than dirt roads, cinder block sidewalks, and shacks with poor insulation and backhouses. He recalls residents having to draw their water from the river that meanders through town. As the years passed, roads were paved, proper houses were built, and businesses were established. Armand, tiring of routine mine work, started a small mining supply company. Determined not to work for someone else again, Armand tried his hand at several business ventures over the years -- some failed, some succeeded and some survived. Although his business ventures were never particularly lucrative, Armand was more concerned with creating and finding economic opportunities that would allow him to remain in Atikokan.

Armand, like Gracie, had grown to treasure Atikokan. His love of Atikokan prompted him to dedicate hundreds of volunteer hours to the community's redevelopment process. Unfortunately, some of Armand's volunteer work, particularly his extensive work with the Atikokan Industrial Development (AID) Committee after the mines closed, was tainted by vicious accusations that he and his colleagues were more interested in lining their own pockets, than in helping the displaced miners find new jobs.

By the time Peter Russell, formerly of Regina Saskatchewan, joined the AID Committee in the early 1980s Armand had long since left the group. Unlike Armand and Gracie, Peter and his long-time girlfriend didn't move to Atikokan to work in the mines. In fact, this young couple arrived the year of the mine closures. Ginny, a freelance artist and writer, agreed to move with Peter, who was attracted by a career opportunity with a local social services agency. The early 1980s were tumultuous times for Atikokan. Both Ginny, who worked part-time for the local newspaper, and Peter felt the economic and social reverberations of the mine closures at their workplaces. Merchants operated as though they were on the verge of bankruptcy. The entranceway to town and the business district were virtually devoid of greenery and flowers; even the red dust on the roadways was beginning to fade.

Both Peter and Ginny felt compelled to help the ailing community and got involved in civic affairs. They were welcomed with open arms. In spite of this, they struggled to find a close circle of friends. *There is a point at which people hold back a little bit when it comes to your really close circle of friends. I think it is a little harder to break into that (A T10).* Despite their struggles to break into the social circles of long-time residents, this introspective couple chose to raise their children in Atikokan. Although they don't view the community through rose-coloured glasses, Peter and his family find Atikokan to be a very comfortable place to live and have no immediate plans to leave.

Atikokan, by and large, meets Flora's 'legitimacy of alternatives' criteria. Four people spoke at length about Atikokan's tolerant and accepting civic culture. Ginny likes Atikokan because its citizens are generally accepting of new people, of different ideas, and of controversial opinions. *I can always have my say. Now a lot of stupid people can have their say too but that has always characterized this community. Nevertheless one of the reasons I'm still here is because they have the right to say that. So there is an opportunity if somebody wants to make a difference here you can do that. You don't have to defer to any special authority to do that. I like the fact that anybody who chooses to put an opinion forward about the nature of this community and where it should go has the opportunity to do so (A T8).* Peter concurs with his life partner's thoughts. *What I like about Atikokan is I'm allowed to think as I wish and do as I wish much more than if I was in any other country and, believe it or not, any other community as well. I'm allowed to criticize and yet respect the town council whereas you couldn't say those things like that in some other places. I'm comfortable in Atikokan (A T13).*

Armand, who was criticized during his days with the AID Committee, reflected on the committee's approach to dealing with accusations that the committee was comprised of self-interested

businessmen who were more concerned with their own pay cheques than those of the displaced miners. *When we came across some negative aspects, we said to ourselves, 'rather than fight these people, why don't we just invite them to a meeting.' We were not out to hide anything. So we did that on a number of occasions. We invited nay-sayers and some took us up on our offer. We invited Aboriginals. We invited women. These were all non-traditional at that time. We had a lot of success in that regard (AT13).* With years of experience serving on volunteer board of directors, Gracie firmly believes that differences of opinions are always aired in a constructive manner. *I have never seen a destructive or demeaning attitude (AT9). Nobody thinks they know everything (AT11).*

Atikokanites, on the whole, are rather accepting of people. There is, however, one exception to this rule – external experts and consultants are generally treated with suspicion. Five participants spoke about their mistrust of consultants. Gracie has a lot of respect for her fellow Atikokanites, but she doesn't trust outsiders farther than her 5 foot 1 inch, 76-year-old frame can throw them. She reflected back on a time during the 1970s, when the community was busy preparing for life after the mine closures, when 'experts' from provincial ministries visited Atikokan. *They would come in here and they didn't have a clue what these people were about. I had a lot of fights with these type of guys because they had absolutely no idea what was going on here. They would come and say, 'why don't people say something?' And I would say, "Excuse. You come in here wearing your three-piece suit and you walk up and down the streets. What do you want? People aren't going to approach you. Sit down with them! Get rid of the suit and act like one of them.' But it didn't happen. I think that they scared off anybody that might have wanted to (AT12).*

In addition to the community's mistrust of outsiders, in the past, Atikokan has also fallen short on process. According to four of my key informants, in the AID Committee days of the 1970s and 1980s, civic leaders focused more on outcome than on process. This led to several disgruntled citizens who weren't shy about voicing their dislike of the AID Committee's closed-door meetings. Armand, who joined the committee when it first formed, reflected upon the committee's way of 'doing business': *The AID Committee tended to be very much in its own eco-chamber (AT13). Every once and awhile somebody would come along from the outside with an idea but mainly everything was generated within the committee. It functioned pretty much independently. There was not much thought into building community support (AT8).*

Armand eventually left the committee after growing tired of accusations that his motivations for serving on the committee stemmed from self-interest. Nearly a quarter of a century has passed since

Armand sat on the AID Committee but the frustrations he experienced are still alive within him. *We were not always that popular. I don't know what the reason. We knew that the less press we got was probably for the best because there would be too many people out to attack us. There was this negative rearguard that had a definite, negative opinion of guys like me. They thought that we were just on the committee to line our pockets (A T13). I'm sure these people wake up in the morning and say, 'god damnit. The sun is shining again!' They were very resistant to change (A T8).*

But the former AID Committee member wonders if the community might have been better off had a more formalized, open planning process been utilized. *Since the AID Committee was a volunteer group, should we have even worried about citizens' perception of the AID Committee? Or should we have just concentrated on getting the job done? (A T13)* According to Armand, life was simpler in the AID Committee days. *Today too many things have been bureaucratized. In those days, we would sit over breakfast and make decisions. There were no motions made. But today, before you can make a decision, you have to conduct a study or take it through three different levels of a board. Don't bother me with a bunch of bureaucracy. Let's sit and have a jam session. Pardon me if that means putting a bottle on the table and having a few drinks. So long as it is creative, let's do it! I miss that. I think the community does as well (A T13).* Gracie concurs with Armand's thoughts that bureaucracy and liability concerns are dampening creativeness arising from community planning processes and civic spirit emancipating from community projects *(A T12).*

One thing is certain - Atikokan's ability to mobilize resources certainly hasn't been atrophied by bureaucracy. All 14 participants spoke of Atikokan's unbelievable ability to mobilize resources in the form of knowledge (technical expertise), money or labour. Atikokanites have a strong civic tradition of 'doing it on their own'. Four people spoke about Atikokan's reverence for local knowledge and self-sufficiency. When the union hall was being constructed in the 1950s, it was the union members who built it on their own time *(A T1).* This tradition was still alive nearly forty years later when an engineering company, that was commissioned to design a footbridge, arrived at a cost estimate twice the size of the community's budget. Ginny, a member of the trails committee at the time, was struck by the tenacity and ingenuity demonstrated by two of her fellow committee members. *We had guys like Bill and Herman who thought they had ideas of how to make it easier – how to make this bridge cheaper (A T10). They told us, 'It just doesn't need to be that expensive and we don't think it will work.' So they went away and came back with a design. They did it on a piece of paper that was all dog-eared and full of eraser marks and pencil lines. They showed us the design and it was really quite an attractive thing. So we actually made it part of the criteria that these engineers had to talk to Bill and Herman before they finalized their plans. The engineers were a*

little hesitant at first, but after they reviewed Bill and Herman's design they were flabbergasted. I remember one of the engineers saying, 'I don't know where these guys came from but they should be engineers. It is a beautiful design and can be done for about less than half of what we had talked about.' (AT8) We are really good at doing those hands-on sorts of things (AT9).

Five Atikokanites spoke at length about the community's incredible knack for fundraising. Whether a family has been burned out of their house; a school needs playground equipment; or the hospital needs a new X-Ray machine Atikokanites reach deep into their pockets to give. *There is a genuine cooperation across the community to make these things happen (AT8), particularly if it relates to kids (AT2).*[18] But adult fundraising activities, such as elections, are typically lucrative endeavours as well. Armand commented that, *we can get more volunteers to work on an election campaign than we need. We raise in Atikokan every election a minimum of one dollar for every man, woman, and child in this community. There is not another place on the continent that does it. For that, I'm proud of Atikokan. This is supposed to be a poor community, but the money is always there (AT1).* Gracie agrees with Armand that Atikokan is a poor yet remarkably giving community: *It is a terrible place to be in the Fall. Everybody is selling tickets. You can't get away from it. People are generous, but they can only be generous to a point (AT12).*

Peter, a little younger and perhaps a little more optimistic than Gracie, talked about the open-handedness he experienced when fundraising for the hospital's X-Ray machine. It took just over a year for his group to raise $170 000. Each month throughout that year they held fundraising events. At one of these events, they auctioned off donated crafts: *I paid $75 for a bird feeder and I hate birds. Sandy, next door, paid $85 for a magazine rack and he already had one! (AT4)*

When Atikokanites believe in a community project, they get behind it. More often than not, they offer their labour. Five people spoke about how Atikokanites are extremely giving of their time. Volunteers built a ski hill, a community centre, an industrial mall, an indoor arena and, most recently, an outdoor sportsplex. As Peter says, *they are all kind of like barn raises (AT8).* Back in the days when the mines were operating, if citizens demonstrated a burning desire for a community project, then mine managers were willing to donate money, materials, equipment, and/or labour to assist with the project. Town council has always been much more tight-fisted *(AT6).*

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[18] Thomas Rotolo (2000), in his study of how membership in volunteer associations varies across life-stages, reiterates the commonly held belief among voluntary association scholars that "the presence of children increases participation in voluntary associations because children can draw individuals into community life" (p. 1138).

Gracie remembers asking town council for assistance with her drive to build an indoor arena. *They said if you come back with money, then we'll look at you. We raised $3000 selling potato chips for Grey Cup day and we went back to council. They didn't say too much. I remember speaking with Tom, Jack and a few others about forming a committee because in those days they didn't listen to women too much. So we got a committee together. Then we formed an auxiliary committee of women who would get together to make things that could be sold to help fundraise for the arena. Probably at one time we had about 90 women involved with fundraising. Then we went to the mines and mill and asked them to donate through payroll deductions. They agreed. We ended up raising $185 000. Then we got the Steelworkers to come and help put up the steel for the arena on their own time. The arena was built out of desperation – there were little kids out there in the freezing cold (A T6). It was a big project that the community really got behind. It was built by the people for the people (A T11). And then when it burnt – that was just devastating. We watched it burn and cried (A T3).* With a single match, an arsonist destroyed years of hard work. Fortunately, insurance paid for the rebuilding of the community's beloved arena.

Despite citizens' willingness to invest in community projects, citizens are much more wary of business investments after having been 'burned' one too many times. Four people spoke about their unwillingness to invest in businesses after the failures of the past. Armand recalls spending hours on the telephone trying to help raise a quarter of a million dollars needed for an economic development initiative that promised to bring manufacturing jobs to Atikokan. The company, aptly named Replicar, was going to build fibreglass models of classic cars in Atikokan. As deadlines approached and more money needed to be raised, Armand was able to secure investment funds without too much of a selling job *(A T13)*. Armand was a credible person; he had the investors' trust. But trust wasn't enough. After a few months of operating, the business failed. *A lot of people lost money on that and it made everybody pretty shy about investing again (A T9).* Gracie and her husband were one of Replicar's investors. *I remember we put into it. That was a waste (A T5).* Half of my interviewees mentioned the Replicar fiasco in one capacity or another. It is a black mark in Atikokan's history. Atikokanites may forgive, but they never forget.

In spite of this economic development failure, some members of the AID Committee were tremendously successful at convincing provincial politicians and bureaucrats to give the ailing mining community a fair shake at finding new economic lifelines. Atikokan has a remarkable ability to mobilize resources within and, according to three of my key informants, beyond its municipal bounds as well. In discussing Atikokan's inter-community linkages, Peter firmly believes that *Ontario Hydro's generating station is here because of the influence of Bill Davis, who was the Premier of the day and a*

personal friend of Bob, an AID Committee member. Davis instructed the chairman of Ontario Hydro that the Atikokan option had to be seriously considered. The particleboard plant is here for the same reason (A T8). When the American-based company went to the provincial government for permission to establish an operation in Ontario, the owner was told in no uncertain terms, 'if you want to locate in Ontario, you must locate in Atikokan.' (A T9) Armand couldn't agree more with Peter. *Bob is a good, good friend of mine. We spent so many hours together in this office – many, many nights. I'm sure you know Bob. He can open any door. The guy is incredible. How fortunate could we be? You can see how powerful political connections and government influence can be. But as much as those kinds of things happen in Atikokan and as much as they are wonderful for Atikokan, we have very, very, very few political connections in the grand scheme of things (A T13).* But as Ginny astutely points out, *anybody in Atikokan can know more provincial and federal government people than they would living in Toronto. This empowers people. Psychologically, you don't feel as helpless or alienated (A T9).*

But Armand, representing the thoughts expressed by three of my participants, wonders if the AID Committee and its politically connected civic leaders did the community a disservice by creating economic opportunities on behalf of citizens, rather than encouraging residents to find their own sources of economic relief. *I believe that the AID Committee's successes caused many people to become too socially dependent on government handouts for their existence. We didn't encourage people to be responsible for their own well-being. Too many people were supported to remain in the community and now it is reaching into a second generation (A T13). I remember letters to the editor where people complained about people not doing more for them. Well do it yourself! (A T6) We have a bit of an attitude problem here. I think some people here still have their lunch kits packed and are waiting for the mines to open. It is a very small mentality. I think it is getting less and less, or at least I hope so (A T9).*

When asked to comment on the social dynamics of the AID Committee, Armand had nothing but glowing reviews. *The AID Committee was primarily formed by concerned guys who all had similar ambitions and all probably wore a suit and tie most of the time. We were the same kind of guys with the same kind of attitude. We set politics aside and worked toward a common goal. That was fantastic! (A T13)* Five of my interviewees agree that social circles, and often civic affairs, are frequently demarcated by education and occupation. Except, according to one of those five people, when you become a senior. *Once you turn 65 years old and become a senior, all of those differences seem to melt away. You go to the seniors centre and look around. You have people who used to be mine managers, teachers, miners, government workers, etc. When you become a senior it doesn't matter anymore what your occupation used to be (A T12).*

Prior to retirement, Atikokanites typically form distinct, tight-knit social networks that co-exist quite comfortably together in a shared geographic space. Peter uses his experiences on the golf course to demonstrate this point. *The separation between blue collar and white collar is characteristic of the community. But there are certain activities where boundaries are crossed. If you look at golf membership, you would find members from every walk of life, but if you were to follow the day-to-day behaviours on the course you would find that people are clustered with people of similar values or employment (A T8).* When Peter moved to the community, nearly 25 years ago, he found *Atikokan to be quite friendly up until a point. You know your neighbours instantly - they kind of watch out for your house when you are away. But in terms of inviting you over for dinner, that sort of thing tends not to happen so much unless you are a 15th generation Atikokanite (A T10).* Gracie reinforces Peter's observation as she left our interview to meet up with a group of gals she has known for over forty years. *The four of us meet for coffee every morning (A T5).*

But, according to five of my interviewees, social stratification in Atikokan does not equate to social isolation. The mine managers were the ones credited for setting this tone. *They more or less stuck to themselves but were always gracious (A T4).* Gracie reflected back on the early mining days when *we didn't have very much to do with the mine managers because they lived out at the mine. They would come in and ask us how we were getting along. They were very good to us because they were in the same boat. The president's wife had never lived in such conditions. They were just as bad as the conditions that the rest of us were living in. They didn't socialize greatly with us (A T11). The managers hung around together and miners hung around together. But there was never any great separation or animosity (A T1).*

Strong social networks aren't the only type of networks pervading Atikokan's civic culture. People of diverse ages, occupations, and income levels will rally together around a common cause. According to all 14 of my interviewees, Atikokanites pull together when tragedy strikes, when kids are involved, and when community betterment is challenged. *People certainly support one another here. I don't think the friendliness of Atikokan has ever dwindled. People are still very good. You only have to experience a tragedy to see how good Atikokanites are (A T1). They really pull together. That spirit has never really died. The history of Atikokan has always been 'lets get together to get this done' (A T12).* Ginny and Peter lived in several communities before choosing to settle in Atikokan. As Ginny says, *I have never been in a town that pulls together as well as Atikokan does. Here no one is better than another person (A T11).*

Two key informants, however, maintain that the true spirit of community-wide collaboration wasn't tested until the mine closure announcement was made. *The true spirit of really working together didn't*

happen until the threat of a shutdown. Boy that changed the whole community. Before that we lived in this small town and got along well but we never fully understood the true talent we had until we put it to work (A T9). I remember we must have had 400 people crowded into the Moose Hall and another 400 people out on the street with loudspeakers when the Ontario Hydro review committee came to Atikokan for a public meeting (A T13). At that point in time, Ontario Hydro hadn't decided where to locate its new coal-fired generating plant. Citizens believe the strong community support demonstrated that evening helped make up the minds of the review committee members to locate the plant in Atikokan.

Three interviewees spoke about how people of different walks of life also frequent the same social outings. As Gracie says, *the one thing I like about this community is that you have a spaghetti supper at the United Church, but the Catholic priest is there and the Anglicans are there (A T1). I like the fact that from time to time, whether it is something as innocent as a spaghetti dinner or the construction of an addition for the hospital, Atikokanites cross social bounds and pull together (A T8).*

Atikokan's diverse networks exemplify its civic community. Civic leaders emerge from diverse and unlikely corners of the community. Four interviewees discussed how women, more often than not, are Atikokan's civic drivers. The initiative to establish a women's crisis centre stemmed from two battered women who had gumption and tenacity to talk openly about the unspeakable *(A T11).* Women led the fundraising drive to build an indoor arena *(A T6).* Women worked to celebrate and preserve Atikokan's mining heritage through the establishment of a Mining Theme Attraction and the painting of themed murals throughout the community *(A T8).* Gracie reflected on the heroic actions of her counterparts: *Oh women stood up and looked after themselves. They had to because if they didn't they would just have been trampled right into the ground (A T11).*

According to Pamela Popielarz (1999), the social world is "substantially and persistently ordered by gender" (p. 245). Studies have shown that women's volunteer efforts tend to be oriented toward "domestic affairs", while men typically join organizations that focus on "extradomestic concerns" such as economic goals (McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 1982, p. 884 qtd in Rotolo, 2000, p. 1140). Patterns of civic behaviour in Atikokan seem to support this assertion. To improve the quality of life of their families, women worked tirelessly to build an indoor arena and to establish a women's crisis centre. The AID Committee, on the other hand, was primarily comprised of men determined to secure Atikokan's economic future.

But men have not always dominated civic affairs in Atikokan, nor have white-collar professionals. Stemming from two of my interviewees' experiences in other communities, they noticed right away that Atikokan has a unique quality not often found in other communities. *There didn't appear to be any class distinctions or differences. That was something we really noticed in Atikokan. It didn't matter if you were a doctor or a businessman or a street sweeper. If you were members of the same club, then you worked together irrespective of your day job (AT7a)*. Peter recalled the people he worked with on economic development projects in the 1980s. *If I had to look back on those days, the people who came up with the best ideas, who put the most work in, and who produced the most profound changes in the community were Bill, who used to be a foreman at the mines, and Herman, who also worked for the mines (AT8)*. Over the course of time, since the mines closed, a cross-section of people have spearheaded and engaged in Atikokan's economic redevelopment initiatives.

According to five of my interviewees, the most successful community projects in Atikokan have been grassroots, citizen-led initiatives. *When one person or a group of people have a good idea and they are able to build up enough head of steam to draw enough people together, then they go ahead and make it happen. A few people rally a bunch of people (AT2). And more often than not organizations, like the municipality or the economic development office, say, 'okay we've got to get in front of this or we are going to be dragged behind it'. In Atikokan it is easy to get 20 people together with hammers in their hands and a case of beer to build a rink shack. It is something they know how to do. It is something they like to do (AT10)*. This is how the cross-country ski trails, the fish hatchery, the mining theme attraction, the arena, the outdoor sportsplex, and numerous other community projects were brought into fruition. *For some reason, this culture of just going out and doing something for yourself seems to have played a strong role in the community. It is a culture that will continue to prevail (AT10)*.

But where does this civic culture stem from? What caused Atikokan's strong civic tradition of acceptance, autonomy and linkage to grow and flourish through time? Two of my research participants postulate that Atikokan's civic spirit stemmed from the isolation, the lack of wealth, and the mass convergence of young people streaming in from somewhere else. *If you talk to anybody that came in the early days of the mines, they couldn't believe it. They thought Atikokan was the absolute end of the earth because there were no cars. There was no highway. There was no place to go. Everybody had come from somewhere else. When people first arrived here they knew that had to get together. They were all in the same boat – everyone was a stranger. This whole community kind of grew up together. The housing was terrible. People lived in tents and in shacks. If you had a decent shed somebody would practically rent the darn thing off of you. There was a real housing*

shortage. Everybody lived three or four families to a home. It was just natural. They all helped their neighbours build something. Everybody helped everybody and nobody thought they were better than anybody else. They all did everything together because nobody had any money. They just had fun. There were no airs put on with what you wore. And that was the start of community spirit in Atikokan (AT5).

But surely isolation, limited financial resources, and transient behaviour weren't the only factors contributing to the formation of social capital in Atikokan. Nearly every "instant town" on Canada's resource frontier experienced similar growing pains. Yet each of these resource communities have developed and evolved their own unique civic culture, as did Atikokan. According to an overwhelming majority of my key informants, Atikokan's unique civic culture can be attributed to two additional factors:

  i)   Values and philosophies of mine managers
  ii)   Farming Culture

Eight interviewees pointed to the mine managers' moral code as the soil that germinated Atikokan's civic community. *Steep Rock was very, very community-minded. Fotheringham, the president of SRIM, once said, 'We don't want to run the damn town. We've got other things to do. We're miners.'(AT1) He wanted the community to administer itself (AT8). Fotheringham and other mine managers also lived in the community and raised their kids here. They were friendly. They were people just like the miners were - half of them didn't have a decent place to live either. We were all in the same boat. It didn't matter if you were the head of the whole bloody mine; you weren't any better than the guy who ran the trucks (AT11). Any sense of community was fostered by mine management. They didn't want to create a company town. Rather they tried to foster a community separate from the mine (AT9). You've got to give them a lot of credit for doing that. If more corporations did that, society would be much better off (AT1).*

From the top to the bottom of the mining hierarchy, employees of Steep Rock and Caland Ore were cajoled and encouraged to participate in civic affairs. Steep Rock designated its top brass to civic positions within the community, while Caland Ore incorporated civic involvement into their employee performance appraisals *(AT8).* One of the community's most revered civic leaders was Syd Hancock, a surveyor with Steep Rock. *Syd was Mr. Atikokan (AT5). He knew everybody from one end of the country to the other. But Syd wasn't class conscious (AT4). He was involved in everything. You name it and he was there (AT9).* In terms of financial assistance offered to community projects, the mines were always careful to keep an arms-length distance from the projects. *Steep Rock was always an easy touch for $500 but you could never get much more out of them. Caland had a much more tight-fisted policy when it came to*

money for civic projects because the local management had no discretionary power. But they were very generous when they did give. Beyond that the mines would mainly make equipment available for community projects (A T8).

If a project was important to the citizens of Atikokan, then they had to demonstrate its importance through leadership, hard work and on-going commitment prior to any serious financial or in-kind donation from the mines. *If you look at some of the really nice company towns, there isn't any community spirit. But here the mine management expected us to do it ourselves. When they did give a lot of money, it wasn't always used very wisely (A T6). But, on the whole, the mines showed wonderful foresight. It is like a mother saying, 'I always pick up after Elsie' and the kid grows up not knowing how to tie her own shoes. That attitude might have saturated other company towns, but it certainly didn't happen here (A T1).*

But not everyone is convinced that Atikokan's civic spirit stemmed from the management philosophies of the mines. *I'm not certain that either of the two companies were the primary shapers of community. I think our culture of cooperation would have existed regardless of the mines' nature. I don't attribute much to them at all. I think this genuine cooperation across the community comes out of the farm community (A T8).* Four of my key informants believe that Atikokan's 'barn raising' civic culture stemmed from the mass influx of individuals, who relocated to Atikokan in the 1940s and 1950s, from farming communities.

Over a third of my research participants grew up on a farm. *If you look around Atikokan, many people are originally from the farming district to the west of us. I used to work in the employment office at the mine at a time when it wasn't uncommon to hire 30 people a day. Most of those people came from the district. The rest came from mining communities in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia, and Nova Scotia. There was a real mix of people from the east and the west (A T6).*

When my research participants, who had grown up on farms, were asked if they were surprised by Atikokan's strong civic spirit, they all said a resounding 'no!' *I grew up in Saskatchewan. Now the sense of community there was phenomenal (A T1). Everybody had to work together; it was a case of survival. You had to be a cohesive force in society (A T11). Even today if you visit farms in the west, people are welcoming and pretty non-judgemental. A lot of people who moved to Atikokan grew up in those areas (A T8).* Despite its mining background, Atikokan exhibits many characteristics typically exuded by farming communities. Whether or not this culture stems from the mass influx of farm folk during the early mining days, one thing is certain – the philosophies, attitudes, and ethics of citizens play a fundamental role in the

formation of a community's civic tradition. So too does the company's corporate culture, in the case of "instant" resource towns. But are these findings consistent across resource communities? For this answer, I examine the nature and causes of civic tradition in Elliot Lake.

Elliot Lake

Elliot Lake, compared to Atikokan, has a more class-conscious and fractured civic dynamic. This is evidenced by one research participant who lived in both communities. *I just didn't feel comfortable in Elliot Lake at first. I started working and that tended to fill my days, I was content to not look outside of the home after that. I always felt guarded in the community, whereas in Atikokan I never had that feeling. I'm not sure if it was because I had more in common with citizens of Atikokan or if it was because people were generally accepted as they were. In Atikokan, I felt much more comfortable walking along the street, meeting the street sweeper and asking the fellow if he wanted to have coffee together. I'd much prefer to have coffee with the street sweeper than a big shot from the mine or an alderman. Personally, I don't care for sitting with somebody who is always trying to impress me. Social status seems to be much more important in Elliot Lake than it ever was in Atikokan (AT7a).*

Using Flora's analytical framework to guide my analysis, I found Elliot Lake to have a capacity to mobilize resources, particularly beyond its municipal boundaries; to have a predominance of strong ties linking people of similar status; and to have a tendency to focus on outcome, rather than process. This last finding deserves further explanation and inquiry since Elliot Lake, throughout its lifetime, has utilized the latest techniques in planning theory from the master planning of the 1950s to modern day participatory processes. Unlike Atikokan, acceptance of conflicting opinions and of controversy (Flora's 'legitimacy of alternatives') has never been Elliot Lake's strong suit. But in both communities what, not how, decisions are made has been of the utmost importance.

It was Elliot Lake's vibrant and distinct civic enclaves that propelled the community through its darkest days and ought to be credited for the successful reinvention of the community's economy. Without these enclaves, comprised of dedicated, tenacious visionaries, and without the community's long-standing tradition of accessing resources from the outside, Elliot Lake likely wouldn't have survived the decimation of its economy in 1990. This former mining 'mecca' turned retirement haven may go down in the history books of Canadian resource communities as being *the* economic redevelopment success story of all time.

It is the community's long-standing civic tradition that deserves recognition for achieving this feat. Despite its success, Elliot Lake's civic culture, surprisingly, does not adhere to Putnam's textbook definition of civic community. Elliot Lake defies a fundamental principle of social capital theory – that strong civic communities are the bedrock of economic resilience and prosperity.

When asked if the community's formative planning process, controlled by technocrats, bureaucrats and mining magnates in the south, impacted the formation of Elliot Lake's civic tradition, all of my research participants, except for one, shook their head and uttered the two letter word - no. If comprehensive planning controlled by technocrats wasn't a determining factor in the formation of the community's civic culture, then what was? Some interviewees indicated that economic wealth and prosperity experienced during the mining booms may have induced 'civic laziness', while others blame the government and the mining companies, and their contemporaries - the municipality and Retirement Living Program - for fostering and nurturing a culture of dependency. Applying Atikokan's findings to Elliot Lake, the influx of mining managers from Southern Ontario cities and miners from hard-rock mining camps across Canada may have contributed to the formation of Elliot Lake's civic tradition, just as the values and philosophies of Elliot Lake's founding fathers – Franc Joubin, Joseph Hirshhorn, and Stephan Roman – might have effected the tradition as well.

Meet Bryan Doucette, Audrey Verbo, Kelly Kirkpatrick, Gerald Harmer, and Pierre Boudreau who describe the nature and causes of Elliot Lake's civic tradition in the unfolding pages.[19] At the tender age of 9, Bryan Doucette moved to Elliot Lake with his family in 1957. His father, having landed a job working for Denison Mines moved his family to Elliot Lake, was forced to leave his deep family ties in Quebec behind. Determined to escape the 'boom–bust' mining cycle characteristic of Elliot Lake that Bryan had grown to despise, Bryan put himself through university. After graduation he worked in the health care field for several years before deciding to return home. After accepting a position at the local hospital, Bryan, his wife, and new baby moved to Elliot Lake during the height of its second boom. Love of Elliot Lake and a distain for 'boom-bust' economic cycles prompted Bryan to take an active role in community development. After the final closure of the mines in the early 1990s, Bryan, now executive director at a local old age home, became excited by the possibility of transforming Elliot Lake into one of Canada's premier retirement destinations. His career as an administrator and his involvement in civic affairs blossomed in the 1990s.

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[19] These composite characters faithfully reflect the actual lives and experiences of my participants. Their socio-economic and demographic profiles have been altered to protect their identities. Italicized words are actual quotes taken from my research participants.

Just a few short years after Bryan and his family had relocated to Elliot Lake from a mining camp in Northern Quebec, Andrey Verbo's husband became Elliot Lake's first high school music teacher. They moved to the community as a young couple from the suburbs of Toronto, arriving during the depths of the first major downturn in the economy in the 1960s when most people were moving out, not in. Their arrival sparked curiosity and hope, as Audrey and her husband were featured in the local newspaper. Audrey wasn't used to capturing such attention. But she quite liked it. This attention prompted her to become involved in civic affairs. For nearly three decades, Audrey devoted her energies to her family and to the betterment of Elliot Lake. When the mines announced their closure, Audrey jumped at the opportunity to become involved in the community's economic adjustment process, only to have her efforts rebuffed by the 'power brokers'. She quietly retreated from civic life.

Kelly Kirkpatrick, on the other hand, was welcomed into the economic development fold. This bachelor relocated to Elliot Lake from the Ottawa Valley in the late 1980s. Luckily, he wasn't in the mining sector. But the field of real estate wasn't much better. When a distant cousin asked Kelly if he was interested in purchasing his cousin's small real estate business in Elliot Lake Kelly jumped at the opportunity. Shortly after the mines announced their closure, Kelly quickly became immersed in the community's economic redevelopment. He had a vested interest – the future of his business was on the line. Kelly was determined not to become a victim of this calamity.

Kelly would have preferred to have been an innocent bystander as Gerald Harmer was. After 33 years of employment, Gerald retired from Rio Algom just months before the company announced its intentions to downsize. Single and fresh out of high school, Gerald had moved from Sudbury in 1956 to work for Rio Algom, where he apprenticed as a machinist. Miraculously, Gerald managed to avoid being laid off during the first downturn and retired before the second. He pored his heart and soul into the community of Elliot Lake. It is where Gerald found the love of his life, raised his twin daughters, and spearheaded numerous sports and recreation developments. Pensively, Gerald watched as his beloved community rapidly morphed into a retirement destination. He embraced these changes with vigour. He formed a hiking/canoeing club and offered tai chi lessons in the municipal park. Gerald had little interest in the politics of the community's redevelopment but he continued to concern himself with creating and sustaining recreation opportunities for residents, new and old alike.

Politics and economic development were Pierre Boudreau's only interest in Elliot Lake. Pierre, a bureaucrat with the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines based out of Sault. Ste. Marie, was appointed to represent the ministry's interests in Elliot Lake's diversification process. During the early 1990s, Elliot Lake became Pierre's second home although he had little interest in making it his permanent residence. Pierre quickly made enemies with the community's 'power brokers' by openly criticizing their handling of Elliot Lake's redevelopment process. Pierre had developed a sympathic ear for a group of vocal 'disenfranchised' ex-miners. This caused him to break a cardinal rule among successful bureaucrats – he took sides. This fatal mistake led to his dismissal from the ministry and ended his formal association with the community of Elliot Lake.

The polarity of opinions regarding Elliot Lake's civic dynamics ranges from unsullied praise to bitter condemnation. This is particularly evidenced in discussions of cohesion and inter-group collaboration. Gerald and Bryan espouse the virtues of civic life in Elliot Lake, while Audrey and Pierre tend to focus on the community's social cleavages. Bryan, representing the thoughts held by eight interviewees, has always found his home to be welcoming and hospitable to newcomers. *When I was a little boy, Elliot Lake had a very dynamic, multi-national, cosmopolitan type of population. There was a sense of community, of camaraderie, of welcoming. Everybody came from someplace else. So it was easy to integrate. Those same values are still alive today. For example, only 3 or 4% of my church congregation is made up of original Elliot Lakers. Newcomers have moved in to the community, become involved, and are starting to take over. You see it in social clubs and in various volunteer organizations (EL2). They seem to integrate very well. We have a community choir, which is wonderful. I see the ministers in and out of each other's churches. I think it is a nice community that way (EL10).*

Gerald couldn't agree more with Bryan as he reflects on his involvement with organized sport. *Community projects have always been done by groups of people. When the mines were open, these volunteer organizations were pretty independent. It wasn't necessarily the same people who built the ski hill, the curling club, or the arena (EL9). But we also had a minor sports association that worked for the betterment of 13 individual athletic clubs (EL17). People would work together for a common good. Things worked well in those days (EL13).*

But Audrey and Pierre, speaking on behalf of five key informants, expressed grave reservations about Elliot Lake's strong ties and distinct social groups. To help illustrate her point, Audrey used the municipality's annual Christmas party as an example of the community's exclusionary practices.

Why isn't there a Christmas party for the entire municipal staff? They have one for management and invite the aldermen, but there is no party for the low man on the totem pole. Why is it just for management? Shouldn't everyone who works for the City be invited? They all work together for the same organization (EL6). She also recalled a time when her efforts to assist with a church supper were rebuffed. *I was told, 'No, we want this one to be done well. We'll have so-and-so do it.' And I thought, 'well then so-and-so can do it! (EL7)*

When I met with Pierre he attempted to identify the origins of these social cleavages. *As I understand, there was never much social cohesion among different groups such as between miners and mine managers; between miners of the two companies; or between the mining and the non-mining community. In the mining heyday, business owners and government workers, like nurses and teachers, felt as though they were on the bottom rung of the social ladder. So when the mines closed, I think the non-mining community had an attitude towards miners that was like, 'glad they're gone'. There is a class prejudice against miners; ex-miners participation in the community's redevelopment was never valued in any serious way. The people involved in the economic transformation of this community were essentially of similar mindset – they all thought the same way (EL11).*

Kelly, who arrived in the community shortly before the last massive layoffs, has spent quite a bit of time pondering the community's civic dynamics. Representing the opinions of four interviewees, Kelly isn't nearly as harsh as Audrey and Pierre. *I think for so many years civic organizations were used to being separate, distinct entities. Before the mines closed, there was no need to pull together in the same fashion as experienced since their closure. In the early 1990s, groups struggled to become interconnected because they had never learned how to work together. There wasn't a general understanding of how to work together towards a common objective. People tended to represent their organization's interests, rather than the interests of the community as a whole. They had never learned how. Today, there is pretty good interaction between groups. The biggest hurdle will be getting the municipal government to work together (EL8).*

But to answer your question on cohesion and interaction, the coffee shop and the food court in the mall have made the biggest difference. The greatest drop in centre we have is Tim Horton's. People, from different groups, go there and talk for hours over coffee. They always find some sort of common interest to talk about. It isn't just organized associations that make a difference; informal connections are important as well (EL8).

The topic of the retirees' integration into civic life also generates divergent opinions. Generally everyone agrees that seniors saved the city. According to three of my key informants, these newcomers were a necessary evil; while five other interviewees focused on the positive influence

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retirees have had on the community. *Many are qualified, talented, educated, experienced people who have shown some of the old-timers what being active is all about (EL 12). They brought with them art; culture and appreciation for community. They lead many volunteer organizations (EL 2). Actually two civic organizations that are most impressive are the Institute of Learning in Retirement and the French seniors club. Both are exclusionary but very important. With over 200 members, the Institute of Learning in Retirement focuses on personal development, while the French seniors club is extremely supportive of its members and has a real sense of community (EL 1). Prior to Retirement Living, the Horticultural Society struggled to exist. Today, with over 200 members, the club is alive. And because of this group the community gardens are absolutely gorgeous (EL 4b).* Sense of community typically is the strongest among distinct, close-knit groups; it manifests itself more readily within, not across, social enclaves.[20]

To some the separation between newcomers and old-timers is palpable. As Audrey laments, *If you're not a senior, you are a second class citizen (EL 15). The rift between the two is defined by geography. You've got the seniors and low-income earners living out in the new subdivision (EL 4a). There is the new subdivision and the central community; never the two shall meet (EL 1).*

From my participants' assessment of Elliot Lake's social networks, it is evident that bonding social capital, linking people of similar socio-economic background, and hierarchical networks dominate civic life. Nevertheless, the formation of intra-community ties across social cleavages has grown and strengthened over the years, especially since Elliot Lake's birth as a destination for post-employment leisure. It is no longer a resource community influenced by mining interests, as such its civic culture has begun to morph. Interviewees posit two theories that might explain why the growth of Elliot Lake's bridging ties has been stunted:

    i)   Hierarchical social order established during the mining era

    ii)   Economic prosperity associated with uranium production.

As Ira Robinson stated in his 1962 analysis of Canadian resource communities, new industrial towns are typically characterized by a two-tier class system of professionals and industrial workers – white collar versus blue. "The character of a community is heavily influenced by the class makeup of its population" (Robinson, 1962, p. 85). The hierarchical social order, established in the workplace, also

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[20] There is a common belief among my Elliot Lake participants that its civic tradition is no different than any other community. Critical statements were often qualified by posing a rhetorical question, "but isn't it like this in every community?"

manifests itself in civic affairs. Social stratification is reflected in the composition of and interaction between civic organizations (Robinson, 1962).

Audrey echoes Robinson's theory. *There was a great rivalry between the 12 mines. The mining managers' wives thought they were the 'queen-pins'. Each manager's wife rivalled the other for a seat at the top of the social ladder. Beneath them would be the 'hangers on' who desperately sought friendship with the managers' wives. As the wife of a teacher, I was on the lowest level of the social structure. If somebody had asked my husband and I to attend a social gathering at the mine site, we would have been thunderstruck (EL7).*

Other interviewees suggested the origins of this civic tradition stemmed from financial freedom. *We had the highest paid miners. We had a modern community where everything was brand new. We were economically independent (EL17). As a result, everybody did their own thing. There was no need to pull together because there was a huge payroll here. You had adequate resources to deal with whatever problem might arise. There was no end to the money. The mines spoiled us. And, you know, that can make you lazy! People didn't really dig deep into their own souls and resources to do things. But after the mines closed we realized, 'okay we have to do something for ourselves'. We had to learn to work together (EL9).*

Eight of my interviewees strongly believe that Elliot Lakers pull together in times of crisis extremely well, but that Elliot Lake's sense of community appears to languish in times of economic stability and prosperity. Bryan, reflecting back on his lifetime of civic involvement, made an astute observation. *This community does very well in crisis situations. It's the on-going relationships that are always challenged (EL1). Unfettered financial freedom brings out the worst in human nature. But when you strip that away and put them in crisis, Elliot Lakers work very well together. The closure of the mines did more for the cohesiveness of this community than any other event that has occurred since or before. I miss that momentum. It only lasted until about 1995. I miss that sense of community when people actively participated in civic affairs. They would come to the table and give of their time and talents (EL5). But currently there is this sentiment in the community of 'why don't we have more'. That struggling sense of camaraderie experienced in the early 1990s is now just a faded memory (EL2). When there is a feeling of normalcy or stability, they tend to withdraw. If we could get that momentum back again, then Elliot Lake's future would be fine (EL5).*

According to Jackson and Poushinsky (1971), high rates of in-out migration detract from effective community organization, since civic leaders leave and new people are required to fill those vacated positions. Jackson and Poushinsky's theory helps to explain Elliot Lake's ailing civic participation at

the turn of the 21st century. *We are hard pressed to find a lot of people who say, 'I'm from Elliot Lake' and mean it. There has been a massive turnover in population (EL1). Half of our community leaders left in the mid-1990s and we just lost another whack of them last year. Who do we tap into? (EL14)*

One of my key informants blamed Elliot Lake's high turnover during the implementation of the community's economic redevelopment plan on volunteer burnout and the predominance of franchised businesses. *Before the mines closed, there was potential for civic leadership, but not much opportunity. After the crash, a good number of people with leadership skills came forward. There was kind of an explosion of people growing into leadership roles. But operating in crisis mode for 3, 4 or 5 years takes a toll on people. We suffered from a good deal of burnout. As a result, I think people have been somewhat reluctant to engage in civic affairs. You know, I did the same thing. I've had my lifetime of volunteer abuse. A lot of people retreated from civic life and they haven't stepped back in (EL9).*

Another factor challenging civic leadership is franchise stores. Elliot Lake had an awful lot of franchise businesses. When the shit hit the fan and the business was no longer a profit centre, it either closed or its manager was parachuted to a more profitable business elsewhere. But those businesspeople should have been our civic leaders. This left a gapping hole in our civic fabric because people you would have expected to be leaders had suddenly moved (EL9).

Sustaining, not mobilizing, human resources has been Elliot Lake's problem. It has faced similar challenges when fundraising for civic projects. Six of my interviewees reflected back on the 'good old' mining days when Elliot Lake had no problem mobilizing resources, particularly when it pertained to sports and recreation. Gerald recalled working with a group of his peers to start the Elliot Lake Boys Club. *In the early 1960s, there was nothing for kids to do here. With the Boys Club we had boxing and judo; we had everything. And then the department of Parks and Recreation came on stream and took over the recreation facilities, which was great. At least we had started something (EL12).*

Gerald was also instrumental in initiating the grassroots, community-wide drive to build an indoor arena. *The arena was built by shear force (EL7). Everyone got involved. It serves as an excellent example of community spirit and cooperation among Elliot Lakers (EL17). Our fundraising efforts almost covered the entire cost of the facility. We held bingos. We got in-kind donations from the mines. But it was the citizens of Elliot Lake who built the arena with their bare hands. People from all walks of life came forth and worked together to build this fine facility. It started a real movement in the community (EL13).* This 'barn-raising' is reminiscent of the one that took place in Atikokan. The only distinguishing difference between these two community

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projects was the gender composition of its civic drivers – men led the process in Elliot Lake, while women drove the project in Atikokan.

Gaining steam from this grassroots success story, the next community project was an indoor swimming pool. As Gerald explains, the community's drive to build a pool exemplifies its fighting spirit and the power of one. *The pool was the responsibility of Ruben. He fought tooth and nail with the municipality and council. He fought with the government to get grants. He is the reason we have an indoor pool. He had this, 'I'm going to fight it to the end' attitude. He never let up. We held bingos, barbeques, and walk-a-thons. Finally, the government was willing to take a look at us. So a bunch of us, led by Ruben, met with provincial politicians to present our case (EL 12).*

Elliot Lake has a knack for accessing resources from the outside, as eloquently illustrated by Gerald in his story of the fundraising drive for a pool. Time and time again, over the course of Elliot Lake's short life, politically connected citizens have convinced politicians that Elliot Lake is deserving of government monies. Lester B. Pearson instituted a stockpiling program in the early 1960s, which helped Elliot Lake narrowly escape 'ghost town' status. Then, nearly thirty years later, a local union leader entered negotiations with the provincial government and successfully secured a hefty aid package of $250 million. They wore the same party stripes, and that made all of the difference.

Despite these successes, three of my key informants spoke fervently about how Elliot Lake's internal ability to raise funds has been severely undermined since the loss of its major industry. My interviewees posited several explanations for this phenomenon. Gerald chocked it up to too many people looking for too much money *(EL 16)*. Bryan blamed it on a false sense of security fostered by the mines. *People would donate their time and their labour to civic projects, but the mines always provided the financial backing. When the mines left, there were no big dollars to easily draw upon (EL 15).* Audrey's assessment of the situation is more critical than Gerald's or Bryan's. She thinks Elliot Lake suffers from a severe shortage of grassroots, self-sufficient initiatives. *We've got the group of ATV riders being pushed by our small business support centre. They are doing some really good things. But it isn't grassroots. Another example is a group of seniors who wanted to start their own summer festival. They put together a great little festival the first year, then it was lacking a bit the second, and by the third year it had died completely. Why? Because the municipality stopped supporting it. This community's leadership, nor its civic projects, are typically grassroots (EL 1).* Compared to Atikokan, Elliot Lake's struggles to drum up grassroots initiatives from diverse and unlikely sources, except when the civic projects involve sports and recreation. This serves as the

greatest differentiating factor between the quality of the civic communities in the two places of study.

On the whole, Elliot Lake's citizenry feels less empowered than the citizens of Atikokan do. Perhaps this is because, according to nine of my interviewees, decision-making power in Elliot Lake has always seemed to be concentrated in hands of a small number of people. This is evidenced by Kelly's frank statement - *you will always be included, but it doesn't mean that you will be listened to (EL1)*. Unlike in Atikokan, citizens were overtly invited to participate in Elliot Lake's economic redevelopment process. Bryan described the diversification process from his vantage point as an active participant in the process. *When you don't invite them, they are angry. But when you leave the door open, few people seem to jump at the opportunity. Irrespective, the mayor wrote a letter to everyone, urging them to get involved. They held annual open houses to discuss and invite comment. All of the economic development committees, like tourism and what not, were open (EL5). A lot of other communities don't allow citizens to have the opportunity to participate in planning. But here, they are listened to and then the decision-makers, whoever they might be at the time, decide what is best for the community based on the feedback received (EL17).*

Pierre, in contrast to Bryan, has a drastically different frame of reference. He is a community outsider who was actively engaged in the community's redevelopment. Pierre makes no bones about his feelings that, *citizens weren't involved in the process in any serious way (EL11). I never got the feeling that the door was open for the average citizen to become involved, at least in terms of influencing the direction of the economic development strategy. Doors were open for projects that needed bodies to help get them off the ground. Take Claire, for example, she was a wonderful lady. I love her. But she was the general and everyone else was her troops. That characterizes a lot of the behaviour I saw when I was working in Elliot Lake. There were a handful of people who were pretty heavy handed throughout the whole process. Volunteer committees were really only given agendas and could only work to a point that somebody would let them work. The minute any volunteer would step out of line and talk about things that the 'power brokers' didn't want them to be talking about, they got squelched. Elliot Lake's redevelopment process was run like a corporation. I think the 'power brokers' commandeered the economic diversification process in the same way that mine managers ran the mines. At the time I was working in Elliot Lake, in the early 1990s, it very much had a company town mentality. I can't comment on its progress since that time (AT8).*

These conflicting recollections of the community's process are reminiscent of my interviewees' divergent descriptions of the quality and quantity of Elliot Lake's social networks, previously

discussed. Four of my interviewees fervently maintain that the community's economic development strategy was based entirely on local input, while four others felt that the participatory process was nothing other than tokenism to mask the thoughts and visions of the community's 'power brokers' and high-priced consultants hired to write report after report and perform study after study. Loyal civic leaders describe these conspiracy theorists as *people who are lonely and have nothing better to do with their time. Everybody is invited to speak their mind in this community. Unfortunately, there are a few people who speak their mind a lot. We have a very significant pocket of disenchanted ex-miners – they are a vocal minority (EL5).*

But no one can deny that Elliot Lake would not be where it is today if it hadn't have been for the tenacious, hardworking, intelligent 'power brokers' who had a vision for this community and would stop at nothing to achieve it. Without these individuals, Elliot Lake's economic development strategy would never have been executed with such accuracy and entrepreneurial flare. The focus was on outcome, not process.

Nevertheless, this conflict between the engaged and the disengaged continues to rage on. Kelly used the sinking of the Titanic as a metaphor to describe the behaviour of Elliot Lake's citizenry since the mine closures. *Elliot Lake is very much like the Titanic. As it started to sink, people who were once gracious friends began to fight for lifejackets. This created an uncomfortable feeling in the community that still exists today. People are still fighting for a lifejacket because we don't have a strong economic base (EL16).* These permanent rifts and the community's on-going inability to resolve them weaken Elliot Lake's stature as a civic community. But from where does this power struggle stem?

According to David McMillan (1996), who has examined the definition and origins of 'sense of community' extensively, trust develops through a community's use of power. Trust is an essential element of social capital. Each community develops its own way of processing information and making decisions. Trust relates to authority. McMillan (1996) quotes Lawler (1992) who found that, "the more unequally the power is distributed within a group, the meaner and more ruthless are all members of that group" (qtd. on p. 320). Trust has been undermined in Elliot Lake for decades. Extrapolating from McMillan's assessment, Elliot Lake's divisive civic affairs stems from an unequal power balance established during the mining era.

As Ira Robinson (1962) freely admits that, "one of the major disadvantages of new planned resource towns is the active animosity which many of the residents feel towards the company" derived from a feeling of powerlessness (p. 158). Citizens of single-industry towns, typically, struggle to develop their own sense of responsibility. Company paternalism substitutes community effort and self-sufficiency (Robinson, 1962). Often an attitude of 'let-the-company-do-it' reigns. Citizens are beholden to the company often deferring to the wishes of the primary employer and chief contributor to the municipality's coffers (Oberlander & Oberlander, 1956). Elliot Lake is a textbook example of a typical single-industry community that developed a culture of top-down decision-making and dependency, as described by Robinson, the Oberlanders, and 12 of my participants.

Audrey, a long-time critic of Rio Algom and Denison Mines' treatment of Elliot Lake's citizens, wholeheartedly agrees with Robinson's assessment of single industry communities. *Elliot Lake has never been independent. It has always suffered at the hands of paternal influences. The mines looked after everything (EL8). If you wanted a community project to get done, then it was always wise to have a mine manager on your committee (EL12). Those two mining companies had a lot of influence on day-to-day life. They would make deals with civic organizations depending on who they liked and who they didn't like. We had no sense of community because we had the mines. They dictated everything. They told us what to do, how to do it, and when to do it. Well the mines aren't here anymore and there is still this attitude that somebody will do it for us (EL14).* During the mining era, there was little sense of 'we are in this together'; rather Elliot Lake's civic culture was dominated by a sense of 'they make the decisions' and 'they'll take care of us' *(EL9).*

After the mines closed, this culture of dependency didn't magically vanish. Paternalism didn't die. It was transposed. Using third person, a frustrated Bryan describes this phenomenon. *People here simply transferred their dependency. Originally, they depended on the mines to provide. But then a lot of the dependency got shifted from the mining companies to the municipal, provincial and federal government. That's the part that I dislike most about this community. It is this sense that life owes them a living. The sense that they are never satisfied with our mere survival, which in and of itself is a miracle (EL2).* Dependency breeds dependency. This is evidenced in Bryan's discussion of the municipality's mentality during the community's economic rebuilding process. *We said, 'if they are going to be dependent on us for funding, then we are going to have better control on them'. This means that we appoint them and we remove them (EL2). It always amazed me that the mining companies could act in a top-down manner, but the municipality could not (EL5).*

But the municipality isn't the only organization that has been accused of assuming the mines' top-down, undemocratic leadership style. Six key informants also pointed fingers of blame at the Retirement Living Program. *To some extent we are still a company town. Retirement Living is a public initiative that it is run like a privately-owned corporation (EL 9). It is a publicly funded organization that deals in secrecy (EL 16). It has all of the power. It owns half the town. It controls almost all of the jobs in the community. It chooses to patronize some businesses, yet shun others (EL 7). Yes, the mines were controlling. But they had a right to be. They were privately owned, for-profit enterprises. Retirement Living isn't (EL 16).*

The majority of my participants agree that the community's paternalistic roots have impacted its civic culture. The degree to which this culture has morphed over time is subject to debate. According to Pierre, Elliot Lake's culture of control and dependency has only intensified over the years. *Elliot Lake wasn't started democratically. It wasn't planned democratically. Its operations were never run democratically. And how it dealt with the loss of its major industry was even less democratic (EL 11).*

Kelly is less fatalistic than Pierre. Since joining the community in the late 1980s, Kelly maintains that the community's civic culture has undergone some positive changes. *When I first arrived, I had a pretty good idea of what this community's problem was. It had never been allowed to develop, because it had always been a company town. The community didn't do things on their own because they always had things done for them (EL 8). But citizens are now learning to do things for themselves. We are beginning to realize that 'they' is 'us' and that we can actually do things (EL 9). For example, the Institute for Learning in Retirement has helped to change that dynamic. It has grown to become a force to be reckoned with. It held a town hall meeting during the last municipal election campaign and it was the first time the administration has ever shown any accountability to the public (EL 8).*

Aside from wealth and dependency imposed by the mining companies, my participants didn't identify any additional causes of the community's civic tradition. When asked point blank if the structure of the formative comprehensive land-use planning process influenced civic engagement, all of my participants, except for one, denied the existence of a relationship between planning processes and civic tradition. The one renegade individual believes that, *if people aren't habituated to participate, then they won't participate (EL 11).* The rest felt that Elliot Lake couldn't have been constructed any other way. Concern for the bottom-line made comprehensive planning, by technocrats from government and private industry, the community's only viable option for development. It didn't seem to stifle civic participation in volunteer associations, which have predominated Elliot Lake's civic landscape since the beginning. But as Flora points out, the difference between 'development *in*

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the community' versus 'development *of* the community' is key to unlocking the mystery of the disparate social fabrics of Atikokan and Elliot Lake.

Generally, my participants agree that Elliot Lake's civic tradition, arising from the era of mining dominance, has had remarkable staying power through time. But with the mass exodus of ex-miners and influx of retirees over the course of a single decade, that culture is morphing. Its civic culture isn't changing because of the utilization of open, participatory planning processes during the community's adjustment period. Changes to the macro-environment led to the decimation of Elliot Lake's mining industry and brought about significant changes to the local political economy. Elliot Lake responded to this tragedy by filling the spaces and places formerly occupied by miners with retirees. These newcomers, armed with civic virtues gleaned from other communities, have melded their individual civic traditions with the Elliot Lake's long-standing civic culture, upheld by its long-time residents. Elliot Lake's civic tradition has changed, and continues to change. But this tradition, established during the heydays of uranium mining and state-led planning, will likely never be erased.

4.4   Summary of Key Findings

My inquiry into the nature and causes of civic tradition in my hometowns led me to reach the following conclusions, which are summarized in Table 3 (on page 100) at the conclusion of this chapter. Atikokan is an exemplar civic community, despite its tightly knit social networks and its tendency to disregard process. It has a public-spirited citizenry cloaked in a social fabric of trust, reciprocity and cooperation. The defining feature of Atikokan's civic culture is the predominance of egalitarian relations and its on-going ability to resolve collective action problems through collaborative processes involving citizens from all walks of life, irrespective of gender and social class. It is this social feature that separates Atikokan's civic community from Elliot Lake's.

Elliot Lake's networks of civic engagement are vibrant and most productive when comprised of citizens who belong to the same social class and who share a similar mindset. Since its inception, hierarchical networks have dominated Elliot Lake's social landscape. Generally, bonding, not bridging, social capital has been at the heart of Elliot Lake's collective action success stories. When citizens from all walks of life are brought together, by the powers that be, deep-seated conflicts and rifts surface and boil over. Contrived construction of social capital, through the employment of structured planning processes, didn't work in Elliot Lake. However, when citizens themselves

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initiate a community project, as evidenced with the drive to build the community's indoor arena, interaction across social cleavages is extremely successful. The community's struggle to build networks across social enclaves stems from long-standing power imbalances established in the mining era. Egalitarian relations have never been Elliot Lake's strong suit. Despite its rich culture of volunteer associations, Elliot Lake does not exhibit all of the necessary characteristics that embody a civic community.

Despite this finding, Elliot Lake defies a common assumption held by social capital theorists that strong community-wide social capital is required in order for a community to achieve economic prosperity. Both Elliot Lake and Atikokan were established as single-industry resource towns during the era of new town planning. Both lost their industry, re-doubled their efforts, and built a new economic base. Although Atikokan reaffirms the thoughts of many social capital scholars, it defies a common belief espoused by resource community pundits - Atikokan never developed a culture of civic apathy and antagonism. This can be attributed to many dynamics, namely the philosophies and attitudes of the company's top management. The structure of planning processes is not one of those factors.

I discovered that it is the people, not the process, that forms and morphs civic tradition. When the origins of a community's civic tradition are investigated, the focus ought to be on *who* the decision-makers were; not *how* the decisions were made But the philosophies and values of individuals, and their impact on the social dynamics of groups, should not be examined in a vacuum. A community's social history cannot, nor should not, be studied in absence of a thorough understanding of a community's political and economic history. The dynamics of the local political economy and changes to the macro-environment can also impact the formation and transformation of civic tradition.

My research findings suggest that the structure of planning processes doesn't cause or morph civic tradition. I also found evidence to suggest that a community's civic culture dictates the execution and efficacy of planning processes. For example, during Elliot Lake's redevelopment process, open, participatory planning processes were employed. These processes, however, merely reflected and reinforced the community's long-standing civic culture. Planning is social capital's handmaiden. Processes mirror, rather than morph, a community's long-standing social dynamics. It is the

attitudes, philosophies and values of individuals and groups - fostered and nurtured by the surrounding political economy - that influence social capital formation.

	Atikokan	Elliot Lake
Origins of Social Capital	Value, attitudes, and philosophies of the community's 'founding fathers' (mine managers); the mining companies' corporate cultures Lack of Wealth Mass influx of people from farming communities (farm culture)	Hierarchical social order established and supported by mining companies' corporate culture Economic prosperity and financial freedom Mass influx of people from Southern Ontario and mining communities
Assessing Social Capital: Legitimacy of Alternatives	Accepting of new people, of controversial opinions, and of different ideas Successful community projects tend to be grassroots and citizen-led initiatives Focus on outcome, not process	Permanent rifts and unresolved conflicts. Decision-making power in the hands of a few (creating a culture of dependency) Focus on outcome, not process
Assessing Social Capital: Mobilization of Resources	Strong tradition of pulling together Able to mobilize human and financial resources with ease Inter-community linkages (e.g. political connections) facilitated resource mobilization	Pull together in times of crisis Struggle to sustain human resources (frequently loses civic leaders) Have experienced difficulties mobilizing financial resources since the mine closures Inter-community linkages (e.g. ability to garner government support)
Assessing Social Capital: Quality of Networks	Combinations of bonding & bridging and horizontal & vertical networks prevalent Civic leaders stem from diverse socio-economic and demographic backgrounds (women and blue-collar workers are as involved in civic affairs as men and white-collar professionals) Fervent respect for local knowledge and deep-seated mistrust of 'outsiders' Intra and inter community ties	Bonding social networks pervade the civic landscape Predominance of tightly knit social enclaves demarcated by class and social status. Hierarchical, patron-client relationships Fighting spirit Respect and admiration for 'outside' expertise Strong inter-community ties
Changing Nature of Civic Tradition	Fairly stagnant	Changing with the exodus of ex-miners and influx of seniors

Table 3: Analytical Comparison of Atikokan & Elliot Lake's Social Capital

CHAPTER 5   ENDINGS & NEW BEGINNINGS

5.1   Overview of Research Questions

This case study of my two hometowns - Atikokan and Elliot Lake - was designed to evaluate the level of community-wide social capital and to investigate the sources and nature of civic traditions in resource communities established during the era of new town planning in Canada. I set out to answer the following questions[21]:

♦ To what degree do Atikokan and Elliot Lake exhibit the characteristics of a "civic community" (a community with high levels of community-wide social capital)?

♦ What factors contribute to the formation of a resource town's social capital? Specifically, does a resource town's formative planning process impact the construction of its social capital?

♦ Once a community's civic tradition has been established, how does it affect the execution of planning processes?

♦ Does a community's civic tradition transform and mutate over time? If so, what causes this mutation?

Chapter 4 offered a thorough assessment of community-wide social capital and identified the sources of social capital in my hometowns. That analysis is summarized in Table 3 on page 100. Chapter 5 draws upon the findings in Chapter 4 and summarizes the origins of social capital. It also answers my other two research questions regarding the nature of civic tradition as it evolves through time. Chapter 5 concludes with a brief overview of my key research findings.

5.2   Origins of Civic Community

Prior to undertaking this research, I knew that my hometowns had woven disparate social fabrics. But I didn't have proof and I didn't know why. As discussed in the previous chapter, my study of

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[21] These research questions are prefaced on two assumptions. First, the presence of strong community-wide social capital contributes to the overall economic, social and environmental well-being of a community. Secondly, a community's civic tradition, formed during early phases of its development, has remarkable staying power through time.

the communities' social capital reaffirmed my intuition that Atikokan and Elliot Lake have contrasting civic cultures

Prior to performing my primary research, I also hypothesized some potential sources of a resource town's social capital. Empowered by the commonly held belief among social capital theorists that social capital is formed at the outset of a community's development, I identified some key differences between the communities' formative growth and development processes:

- Age of the communities – Atikokan was home to approximately 300 homesteaders, prospectors and railway workers prior to the development of its mining industry, while Elliot Lake was carved out of the Canadian Shield to provide a home to thousands of uranium miners who flocked to the north shore of Lake Huron in the 1950s.

- Different authorities responsible for development - In Atikokan, Steep Rock Iron Mines was responsible for creating and developing a permanent mining town. In Elliot Lake, the provincial government assumed responsibility for this development.

- Land-use planning process – Residents of Atikokan worked together to plan the community's development in the absence of a master plan developed by technocrats. Elliot Lake's development, on the other hand, was guided by carefully crafted government policies and modern planning techniques employed by non-resident bureaucrats, consultants, and mine managers.

My research, however, disproved my primary hypothesis, that formative planning processes play an instrumental role in the formation of social capital. All of my 19 research participants in Elliot Lake, except one, discounted planning's influence on the formation of Elliot Lake's civic culture. Only a fifth of my Atikokan interviewees believed that Atikokan's civic culture was developed by Atikokan's pioneers at the turn of the 20th century. An overwhelming majority thought that Atikokan's civic culture was formed during the mining era, likening the community's pioneers to nothing more than *innocent bystanders at the scene of a major accident (A T8)*.

However, residents in both communities pointed to the role that state intervention (or lack thereof) played in the formation of social capital in their respective communities. As evidenced in Elliot Lake's community profile (Chapter 3), the provincial government was extensively involved in Elliot Lake's initial development and its economic redevelopment. The government's heavy hand induced some degree of 'civic laziness', creating a sense of '*they* will take care of us because *they* created us'.

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State intervention in Atikokan, by comparison, has taken place in a more limited capacity. For nearly half of Atikokan's life there was no local government. When the mines were developing Atikokan's townsite, the government policy book on new towns hadn't been completed. When Atikokan's redevelopment process took place in the 1970s, governments were just becoming familiar with the term 'economic development'. Back in those days, the citizens of Atikokan had to develop their own solutions to collective action problems.

My interviewees suggest that state intervention plays a role in formation of social capital, as well as the philosophies, values and attitudes of a community's first residents and 'founding fathers'. These observations regarding the origins of social capital indicate that how planning is done is not as important as who does the planning. This finding contradicts the growing belief among planning theorists that planning processes involving citizen participation and encouraging local ownership of problems can facilitate the construction of civic community. If the people behind the process, however, do not view the community's citizens as equals and believe in local autonomy, then the construction of civic community will be undermined irrespective of the process ensued.

In Elliot Lake, it wasn't the use of a comprehensive master plan that caused permanent rifts and power struggles between miners and mine managers and between the business community and the mining industry. Rather it was the values, philosophies and attitudes of the community's founding fathers - the mining magnates - and technocrats from Toronto who set Elliot Lake's civic tone. These attitudes were also engendered in and further reinforced by the mining companies' corporate culture. According to Ira Robinson and my Atikokan research participants, the type of people who migrated to resource communities also helped to shape its civic dynamics. In Elliot Lake, white-collar professionals brought with them middle class values acquired in the south, while hard-rock miners from northern mining camps who flocked to the 'Uranium Capital of the World' were accustomed to the distinct social hierarchy established by most mining companies. This hierarchical social order, established in the workplace, impacted the nature of civic organizations and other forms of civic engagement throughout the community.

On the other hand, Steep Rock Iron Mines was an exception. It wasn't a multi-national company. Its corporate headquarters were located on the edge of Steep Rock Lake, not on the shores of Lake Ontario along Toronto's Bay Street. Its president was one of the first mining families to take up residence in Atikokan. SRIM refused to serve as a paternalistic father to Atikokan's citizens. White-

collar professionals were encouraged and cajoled to participate in civic affairs. In the formative years of Atikokan's development as a mining town, Steep Rock Iron Mines was an exemplar corporate citizen. Following in SRIM's footsteps, Caland Ore developed a corporate culture that upheld the values and ethics originally espoused by Steep Rock Iron Mines' founders.

According to my research participants, the formation of civic community in Atikokan was further assisted by the migration of farm folk from the west. Unlike most mining communities, the majority of Atikokan's miners did not hail from hard-rock mining camps. Many grew up in farming communities where survival was a matter of cooperation. On the farm they learned the virtues of trust, reciprocity and collaboration for mutual gain. These civic values were transplanted to Atikokan when they decided to leave the farm in pursuit of mineral riches.

A citizen's moral compass is not the only influencing factor on the formation of community-wide social capital. There is some evidence to suggest that wealth (or lack thereof) is also an influencing factor in the formation of social capital. Since the community's inception in 1899, Atikokanites made do with very little. From the days of cinder block sidewalks to the decades of fiscally conservative municipal leadership, Atikokan's citizenry excelled at community-wide fundraising, at harnessing local ingenuity, and at hosting 'barn-raises'. Social capital formed in the absence of financial capital. By the time the last trainload of ore left the community, Atikokan had become adept at mobilizing resources both within and beyond its municipal boundaries

Elliot Lake residents, on the other hand, freely admit that wealth generated from the lucrative business of uranium production induced 'civic laziness'. At one time, Elliot Lake was Canada's most modern resource community and home to the highest paid miners in the country. Economic prosperity breeds civic independence. Prior to the mining busts of the 1960s and 1990s, families, civic organizations, and local institutions had little need for inter-group collaboration; they were self-supporting. Learning to work together, to trust one another, to share scarce resources challenged Elliot Lake's citizenry after the mines closed and economic independence became a faded memory from the past. But, thanks to a hefty government aid package, a cadre of tenacious and talented civic leaders, and a fighting spirit, the community survived (arguably thrived) in the face of economic adversity and an anaemic civic community.

It is interesting to note that although Elliot Lakers discount planning's impact on the formation of social capital, they believe that comprehensive, modern planning in their community led to the creation of sound infrastructure and urban design, which helped Elliot Lake attract tourists and seniors after the mines closed. *Planning of the 1950s created our infrastructure. This infrastructure became part of our strength in that we had something worth marketing to retirees and tourists. It had appeal, but it needed some improvements. My generation bore the burden of replacing ditches with storm sewers, sidewalks, and curbs. We also re-routed and re-paved the downtown core. So if the powers that be had invested a little more money back in 1956 when Elliot Lake was built, it would have done us all a favour. But, on the whole, they gave us good design and good infrastructure (EL2).* Ignoring scathing criticisms, civic leaders of the 1990s worked tirelessly at beautifying and improving Elliot Lake's appearance. Without this infrastructure and leadership, Elliot Lake may have failed in its bid to become a retirement community. It certainly wasn't community-wide cohesion and collaboration that enabled Elliot Lake to transition from the 'Uranium Capital of the World' to a centre for post-employment leisure.

In contrast, Atikokan's infrastructure is in a state of disrepair. Visitors must travel through the middle of an industrial zone to enter Atikokan. Ramshackle skidders, school buses, dilapidated vehicles, and a hodgepodge of unkempt industrial buildings greet visitors. Atikokan's entranceway is almost devoid of trees, flower gardens, attractive signage, and picturesque walking trails frequently found along entranceways to most communities. Its downtown core doesn't look much better, despite 15 years of concerted attempts to 'spruce up' the business district. On-going infrastructure challenges are complicated by the fact that the community was built over swampland. As a result, each winter the paving heaves leaving its streets and sidewalks riddled with valleys, hills, and potholes. Moreover, many of Atikokan's houses were built in the days when codes and standards either didn't exist or weren't adhered to. Atikokan's aging housing stock, coupled with its unkempt entranceway and downtown district, undermines its ability to attract and retain tourists and residents. And Atikokanites know it. As one resident reflected, *If you stay in this town and never leave, you think things are pretty good. Then you go to a real town and you think, 'gosh, we are slobs!'(AT10)* Sound, comprehensive planning, unrelenting municipal leadership, and millions of government dollars facilitated Elliot Lake's successful transformation. These attributes are lacking in Atikokan. Strong civic community saved Atikokan from its economic demise.

Nevertheless, this study's key finding is that planning processes are not the root cause of social capital formation. Participatory planning processes may serve as the basis from which better and

more legitimate decisions are made, but they don't build social capital. This finding supports Coleman's (1990) belief that social capital cannot be acquired through explicit efforts to facilitate cooperation and coordination, rather social capital is an unintended consequence of social relationships (qtd. in Mitchell et al, 1999). Discounting top-down planning, in favour of citizen-led processes, under the mantra of social capital construction is misdirected.

5.3   Lasting Power of Civic Tradition

The majority of my research energies were consumed with assessing community-wide social capital and studying the origins of social capital in my hometowns. A thorough examination of how civic tradition changes and mutates over time was unintentionally pushed to the wayside. This was not my intent at the outset of my research. My original aim was to present a balanced inquiry – one that would address all four of my research questions equally. Performing a 'balanced inquiry', however, was impeded by the lack of measures for assessing the evolving nature of civic tradition in the literature, compared to the volumes of well-developed measures for assessing social capital. This reading of the literature led me to place excessive emphasis on evaluating the level of community-wide social capital in Atikokan and Elliot Lake.

To assess civic tradition my participants were asked if they felt their community exhibited a "strong tradition of community involvement". They were also asked to describe "community life and citizen involvement in community projects" at different phases of their community's lifecycle. Beyond these two questions, no other measures for assessing the staying power of civic tradition were developed.

Despite the absence of recognized, objective measures to assess the changing nature of civic tradition over time, interviewees in both communities made it abundantly clear that their communities possess a civic culture that withstands the test of time. My participants reaffirmed my assumption that once a community's civic tradition has formed it becomes a dominant, formidable force to be reckoned with.

As previously discussed, I discovered that planning processes, irrespective of their structure, do not impact social capital's formation. But I did find that planning processes reflect and reinforce a community's existing civic culture. As evidenced in Elliot Lake, citizen input garnered at open planning meetings did not extensively influence the creation of, nor impede the execution of, a

carefully crafted, focused redevelopment strategy created by consultants and a small cadre of handpicked civic leaders. Elliot Lake developed its economic redevelopment plan within months of the first mine closure, and nothing stopped municipal leaders from implementing this plan. Volunteers were encouraged to implement, not influence, the plan. Bottom-up, citizen-led planning processes, characterized by town hall meetings and volunteer committees, disguised Elliot Lake's top-down redevelopment.

But it couldn't have happened any other way. It wasn't in the community's civic nature. Patron-client relations have dominated Elliot Lake's civic landscape since its inception. The mines controlled Elliot Lake's development. After the mines left, municipal leaders and the business community quietly slipped into this vacated position. Open, participatory, grassroots, bottom-up processes have never been Elliot Lake's civic strength. This isn't the fault of individual citizens; it's the community's civic culture. Elliot Lake's successful redevelopment can be attributed to its civic tradition of strong, forceful leadership and top-down decision-making. If Elliot Lake had attempted to rebuff its civic tradition and genuinely employ a more grassroots approach to its redevelopment efforts, it likely never would have become one of Canada's greatest economic development success stories.

The employment of these en-vogue planning techniques during the 1990s did two things – it assisted with recruitment of volunteers and it raised people's expectations. The latter incited anger, sparked conflict, and intensified long-standing power struggles. Rather than building social capital, these participatory processes further reinforced Elliot Lake's top-down political structures and solidified social networks among people of similar mindset and social class. It was nothing more than old wine in new bottles.

From this assessment of Elliot Lake's redevelopment process, one can conclude that the performance of planning processes is shaped by the social context in which they are employed. The same planning process may operate differently in different civic cultures. Just as Putnam (1993) finds that political institutions to be "path dependent" in his study of Italy's institutional performance, I find planning processes to be path dependent as well - "where you get depends on where you are coming from, and some destinations you simply cannot get to from here" (p. 179).

Planning's relationship to social capital is not bi-directional. The formation of civic community is independent of the type of planning processes that ensue. The efficacy and effectiveness of planning processes, however, depends upon a community's civic tradition. Once a community's civic culture has been established, planning processes merely reinforce and reflect that tradition; they do not change it.

Although planning processes may not cause civic traditions to mutate, I did find some evidence to suggest that civic traditions are changeable. After concluding my interviews, I deduced that a community's civic tradition morphs when the philosophies, attitudes and values of a community's citizenry are revolutionized by changes to the macro-environment. In resource communities, macro-environmental change is frequently caused by disruptions to the community's economy. When miners infiltrated the fledgling railroad community, Atikokan's civic culture undoubtedly underwent a massive and swift transformation. Prospectors, homesteaders and railway workers may well have laid the framework for Atikokan's civic culture, but it was the mines' corporate culture and citizens' ethics and attitudes that nurtured, cultivated and established Atikokan's strong civic community. Nearly 60 years after its inception, this civic tradition still continues to benefit new and old residents alike. Atikokan's transformation from mine town to mill town in the 1970s was not characterized by a mass replacement of ex-miners with new residents. For people who wished to remain in the community, jobs were available. This enabled Atikokan's civic culture to continue into the 21st century.

Elliot Lake's redevelopment strategy, on the other hand, was founded on the active recruitment of new residents to replace hundreds of ex-miners and their families who left the community in search of work. Over the span of a single decade, thousands of seniors took up residence in Elliot Lake. Their attitudes, philosophies, and patterns of behaviour, shaped by the civic cultures of their former communities, permeated the community and melded with Elliot Lake's long-standing civic tradition, thereby changing its composition.

The work of the Institute of Learning in Retirement, an organization that has garnered community-wide respect and admiration, personifies this changing civic culture. Personal development, acquisition of knowledge, and building social networks form the organization's mandate. But its impact on the community's civic culture is perhaps its most notable achievement. Its organizational structure is unique to Elliot Lake. It has demanded accountability from local institutions and

municipal leaders. It challenges the old ways of knowing and doing in Elliot Lake by presenting new mechanisms and opportunities for social interaction. The Institute of Learning in Retirement is just one example of how civic organizations created for and by new residents are transforming Elliot Lake's civic culture established during the mining heydays.

My findings support Jonathan Fox's (1996) conclusion that historical legacies, woven deeply into social fabrics, are not necessarily fixed by history. This statement is further supported and qualified by Autar Dhesi's (2000) finding that macro-environmental changes "exert opposing pressures on interrelations, norms and trusts, and hence social capital" in communities (p. 202). In spite of macro-environmental changes, Dhesi (2000) cautions that a community's mechanisms of decision-making, of conflict resolution, of resource mobilization, of communication, which have evolved over decades, are not easily erased. As I discovered in my investigation of Atikokan and Elliot Lake, the opening and closure of a major industry may induce civic change, but it does not guarantee it. Differing community responses to macro-environmental changes, such as a mine closure, will dictate if and how a community's civic tradition will be affected.

Through the course of my research, I determined that social capital is formed at the outset of a community's development and that the style and structure of formative planning processes which ensue in a community are a symptom, rather than a cause, of social capital formation. I pointed to the philosophies, attitudes, and values of a community's founding fathers and first residents, as well as to a resource company's corporate culture, as the primary origin of social capital in Canadian resource communities. Once formed, social capital manifests itself in a community's civic culture. This culture is subsequently passed on from generation to generation. A community's response to consequential disruptions in the macro-environment determines the extent to which a community's civic tradition morphs. Planning processes merely reflect and reinforce a community's civic tradition; they do not change it.

The question now becomes - what should we do with these findings?

5.4   Implications

In recent decades, planning scholars have propounded models of participatory planning as a means of empowering citizens and redistributing power, thus extending such processes beyond their

original mandate of improving the creation of public space. Generally today's planning literature assumes "public participation is an unalloyed good" (Rydin & Pennington, 2000, p. 153). Planning theorists tend to gloss over the impact broader cultural, social and political dynamics have upon the implementation of 'cookie-cutter' public, participatory processes.

This is evidenced by Paget & Rabnett's 1979 investigation into the problems facing resource communities. To address these problems, Paget & Rabnett (1979) call for the use of different planning styles during various phases of a resource community's development - "the failure to shift planning models can be destructive both for the planning practitioner and the community" (p.13). A technical, directive, top-down approach to planning the community is acceptable. But the planning model must shift during the implementation phase to encourage local ownership of the community. During this phase of a community's development, Paget & Rabnett call for the use of a planning model that encourages local people to assume control over their community's development. According to these theorists, the employment of this 'horizontal' planning model will strengthen the citizenry's ability to resolve collective action problems for themselves. In other words, this model will build social capital.

My research findings, however, directly contradict the philosophy espoused by Paget and Rabnett. Once the framework of a community's social and political dynamics has been set in motion by the behaviours and interactions of its 'founding fathers', no planning model will erase or re-direct the community's social trajectory. This conclusion is further supported by Wichern's study of four Canadian resource communities. Wichern (1971) found the community of Pine Falls Manitoba to have the most vibrant and diverse social networks and greatest capacity to resolve collective action problems of all his communities of study. Despite espousing the characteristics of a strong civic community, Pine Falls' citizens had never been given formal opportunities, through planning processes or local governance, to control their community's development. The citizens of Pine Falls Manitoba felt listened to and respected by their founding fathers, despite the lack of traditional democratic mechanisms of decision-making. They felt as though they could influence the direction of their community, yet they had never been given formal opportunities to do so. Informally, through egalitarian social relations, citizens worked hand-in-hand with company managers to build and grow their community. Atikokan exudes many of the social dynamics and development characteristics Wichern found to exist in Pine Falls, Manitoba.

Given these findings, planning scholars ought to spend less time espousing the virtues of planning models' ability to build civic community and more energy on encouraging practicing planners to study the social, cultural and political dynamics of the communities in which they plan. Planners ought to approach the public realm as both a physical space and a set of social relationships. As Sandercock (1998) eloquently stated in her book <u>Towards Cosmopolis</u>, "spaces are also places, and places have histories" (p. 33). History has power, as demonstrated by a community's inadvertent ability to hold planning processes hostage to its civic tradition. Typically, planners show little respect for local histories (Sandercock, 1998), thereby challenging and undermining their ability to effectively accomplish their job. This phenomenon often embeds itself in a common criticism of participatory planning – namely that such processes have become "institutionalized and parochialized" (Hou & Rios, 2003, p. 20) and have a tendency to be captured by special interests (Rydin & Pennington, 2000).

Planners need to study the social climate and civic history of the communities in which they work. Civic traditions are ineludible. Once a planner understands a community's civic mores, he/she can employ planning techniques that corroborate with the community's ways of knowing and doing. For example, the work of consultants is frequently undermined and rendered useless by Atikokanites' mistrust of outsiders. In many instances, as evidenced by the footbridge project discussed in Chapter 4, the citizens become the community's consultants. This stems from the citizenry's long-standing trust in local knowledge.

Conversely, in Elliot Lake the practice of hiring outside consultants is common and a generally accepted practice. This trust in expert knowledge is reflected in one resident's confession that, *when the public gets involved, you need a lot of paid resources to manage them. You tend to get people who have good intentions, but they don't have the skills to make things happen (EL2).* This sentiment is further reinforced by this resident's justification for Elliot Lake's reliance on consultants, *to develop a plan and implement it we may not have the expertise to do that. Involving people who have that expertise gives that project a greater chance of success. If you implement a flawed plan, it is only because the experience around the table is lacking (EL15).* This civic tradition of revering, respecting and involving outside experts in community projects has existed since the community's inception. As such, planning processes that rely entirely on local knowledge are met with scepticism and mistrust.

Trust/mistrust of local knowledge is one example of how civic traditions in different communities impact the success of planning processes ensued. Public participatory processes are not the panacea for a community's social, political and cultural shortcomings, nor do they unequivocally result in better decision-making in all communities. As described in Chapter 3 and 4, successful community planning in Atikokan doesn't typically stem from open, participatory processes characterized by facilitators, public meetings, and strategy sessions. Rather, citizens rely on their social networks and their norms of reciprocity and trust to successfully complete these grassroots, citizen-led projects. Successful planning in Atikokan has always been bottom-up, but this civic culture didn't stem from the employment of carefully crafted, formalized mechanisms of public involvement during the community's initial phases of development. As discussed previously in the chapter, this contrasts with Elliot Lake's economic redevelopment success story, which stemmed from strong, top-down leadership masked by open, participatory planning processes.

Whether planning for spatial arrangements or economic renewal, being aware of a community's civic tradition will help planners select community-appropriate planning techniques that will facilitate effective and efficient decision-making. This recommendation, however, does not discount the value of participatory planning processes in assisting with the creation of better, more legitimate decisions in some communities depending on their civic tradition. The outcome and effectiveness of different planning processes depends on the social-context in which they are employed.

5.5   Final Remarks & Further Research

This research project delved into several facets of social capital inquiry, from ascertaining its origins to assessing its quality. It was also founded on two key theories propounded by social capital scholars – social capital increases a community's welfare and once a community has acquired social capital it has remarkable staying power. These theories and assumptions were tested through the study of two resource towns built during the era of new town planning in Canada.

Origins of Social Capital

My research participants confirmed my working hypothesis that social capital is formed at the outset of a community's development. I discovered that the attitudes, philosophies and patterns of behaviour of a community's creators and pioneers is the single most important determining factor in

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the formation of community-wide social capital. In resource communities, these attitudes and values are often coloured and influenced by the company's corporate culture upheld by company management, who also tend to double as the community's 'founding fathers'. My interviewees also implicated the nature of state intervention, availability of financial resources, isolation, and a community's spontaneous, immediate growth (everybody came from somewhere else) as origins of social capital. Both communities experienced isolation and "instant" growth, yet they both wove disparate social fabrics. As such, I discount the theory that these two characteristics build social capital.

By the same token, my interviews did not attribute Atikokan's civic culture to its pre-mining pioneers – the railway workers, homesteaders, and prospectors who took up residence in the first half of the 20th century. To my interviewees, the community's influential pioneers and 'founding fathers' didn't arrive until the discovery of iron ore. Given the age of the community, I was unable to interview Atikokan's first pioneers, thereby biasing the study. An in-depth comparative study of Atikokan's civic culture before and after the mines were discovered might shed some light on this issue. What role did Atikokan's rail town pioneers play in the formation the community's civic culture, a culture that is still enjoyed by residents today? To what degree was this civic culture eclipsed by the formation of a new social dynamic created by mining developers and miners who flocked to the community after the conclusion of World War II? Further research is required.

Nature & Consequences of Community-level Social Capital

Extensive research energy was devoted to studying the nature and quality of social capital in my hometowns. Using Jan Flora's entrepreneurial social infrastructure framework as a starting point for my assessment of community-wide social capital in my hometowns, I examined the communities' acceptance of conflicting ideas and opinions; their ability to mobilize resources both within and beyond the community; and their social networks. I found Atikokan's civic culture espoused more of the virtues of a civic community than Elliot Lake's culture did.

The principal distinguishing feature between the two communities is the type of social networks established. Horizontal and vertical social networks characterize Atikokan's civic culture, while Elliot

Lake civic landscape is dominated by social enclaves reinforced by a hierarchical social structure.[22] Elliot Lake's civic culture also struggles to accept controversy and respect multiple ways of knowing and doing. Permanent rifts among social enclaves demarcate this failing. Tightly knit social networks exist in Atikokan as well. Unlike Elliot Lake, however, deep-seated feelings of animosity, antagonism, and apathy do not segregate social circles. Neither community excels at resolving collective action problems by concentrating on how, not what, decisions are made.

Surprisingly this failing did not prevent either community from successfully implementing its economic renewal strategy. Elliot Lake, in fact, contradicts a common belief espoused by social capital scholars that strong community-wide social capital is necessary for economic resilience and prosperity to be achieved. Perhaps civic community isn't a requirement of economic well-being after all? Or perhaps Elliot Lake is an anomaly? Others might argue that Elliot Lake hasn't achieved economic success given its lower than average participation rate and income levels, and higher than average unemployment rate. Since only 10% of my Elliot Lake research participants entertained this notion, its credibility has been discounted and virtually ignored through the course of this research project. Is Elliot Lake an economic redevelopment success story? Further research is required.

Staying Power of Civic Tradition

As previously explained, the majority of my research energies were focused on assessing community-wide social capital and on investigating the origins of social capital in my hometowns. Discussions regarding the staying power of civic tradition were much less extensive. Although I did not employ well-developed measures for assessing the evolving nature of civic tradition, my research participants made numerous inferences regarding the pervasiveness of civic culture during our conversations. Elliot Lake residents, in comparison to Atikokanites, spoke more readily of a changing, constantly improving civic culture, believing that Elliot Lake continues to garner more community spirit with each passing day.

Although not thoroughly investigated, this transformation and mutation of Elliot Lake's civic culture stemmed from the community's response to the loss of its major industry. The mass influx of new residents, coupled with the community's indomitable will to survive, put the community's

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[22] As previously stated in Chapter 2, in this thesis vertical networks describe productive, active agents in civic communities, whereas hierarchical networks exemplify patron-client relations whose presence hinders the formation of civic community.

endowment of social capital to the test during the 1990s. My research participants agree that Elliot Lake is a different community today, both socially and economically, because of its response to the macro-environmental changes experienced at the conclusion of the 20th century.

My findings suggest that macro-environmental changes, not interventionist strategies and processes, cause civic traditions to mutate. Irrespective of their structure, processes, strategies and programs are inadvertently moulded by a community's civic culture. This led me to conclude that planning processes may operate differently in different communities since they are shaped by the social, cultural, and political dynamics unique to each place. This assertion, however, needs to be further tested given my limited means of assessing the evolving nature of civic tradition over time. My finding that civic tradition is a dominant, somewhat malleable, force ought to serve merely as a starting point of further inquiry into civic culture's changing dynamics through time.

Concluding Remarks

Inquiry into origins, nature, and behaviour of social capital is a vast and growing area of study. My probe into the social history of two resource communities has shed some light on the origins and staying power of civic tradition, but it has also brought to the fore numerous plaguing, unanswered questions. It did, however, solve one mystery – I discovered the origins of my hometowns' disparate social fabrics. And I was surprised to learn that they did not result from planning.

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