



Thompson's Economic Development Corporation

The 2009 Thompson Unlimited Annual Workplan

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Introduction

The Thompson Community Development Corporation operates as Thompson Unlimited (TU). Thompson Unlimited is the City of Thompson's Economic Development Corporation. Through a unique 10 year agreement between the City of Thompson and Vale Inco, Vale Inco provides a cash contribution of \$250,000 per year to the City to support economic diversification activities. The City in turn remits these funds to TU to support these activities. Two and a half full-time positions consisting of a shared Administrative Assistant position, a full-time Development Officer and a full-time General Manager form the staffing complement of TU.

The City of Thompson is northern Manitoba's largest community in population. Vale Inco is the largest employer in the community, and indirectly many other jobs and businesses are supported through Vale Inco's mining, milling, smelting and refining activities. Vale Inco is also the largest single source of tax revenues accruing to the City of Thompson. Entering 2009, incredible economic events have unfolded that have affected the world's economy and impacted Thompson. Further, Manitoba Hydro is proceeding to develop nearby Wuskwatim Dam during 2009. Economic volatility, uncertainty and new opportunities are expected to characterize Thompson's economy in 2009.

Thompson serves as an essential regional service centre. From accessing health care, education, government and business services and goods, to being a critical transportation hub, Thompson has an important role to play in their efficient and effective provision to and from the region as well as beyond. Adding new goods and services that enhance the qualities of northern life is of essence. In addition, the resource rents accruing from renewable and non-renewable resource extractions in the forms of hydroelectric development and mining operations add significant tax revenues to the provincial and federal governments. Additional tax revenues are also produced from activity generated from employment and business operations in Thompson, as well as outside the City. The contributions of taxes and resource rents remitted to governments are significant and in turn this highlights TU's purpose to work toward Thompson's sustainability for the benefit of Thompson and a wider range of stakeholders.

On December 3rd, 2008 the Thompson Unlimited Board of Directors along with resource persons convened a special strategic planning meeting to chart the key activities that Thompson Unlimited will pursue during fiscal 2009. Input was additionally sought from the members of the City of Thompson's Development Review Committee and a draft underwent further changes. As well, a presentation was made to the Mayor and Council of the working draft workplan and supporting budget. This final workplan reflects revisions based upon several revisions. Presented below is the 2009 Thompson Unlimited Annual Workplan and accompanying budget.

Thompson Unlimited's Vision Statement

Thompson Unlimited envisions Thompson as a dynamic and vibrant community which will be the service capital of northern Manitoba.

The Vision includes:

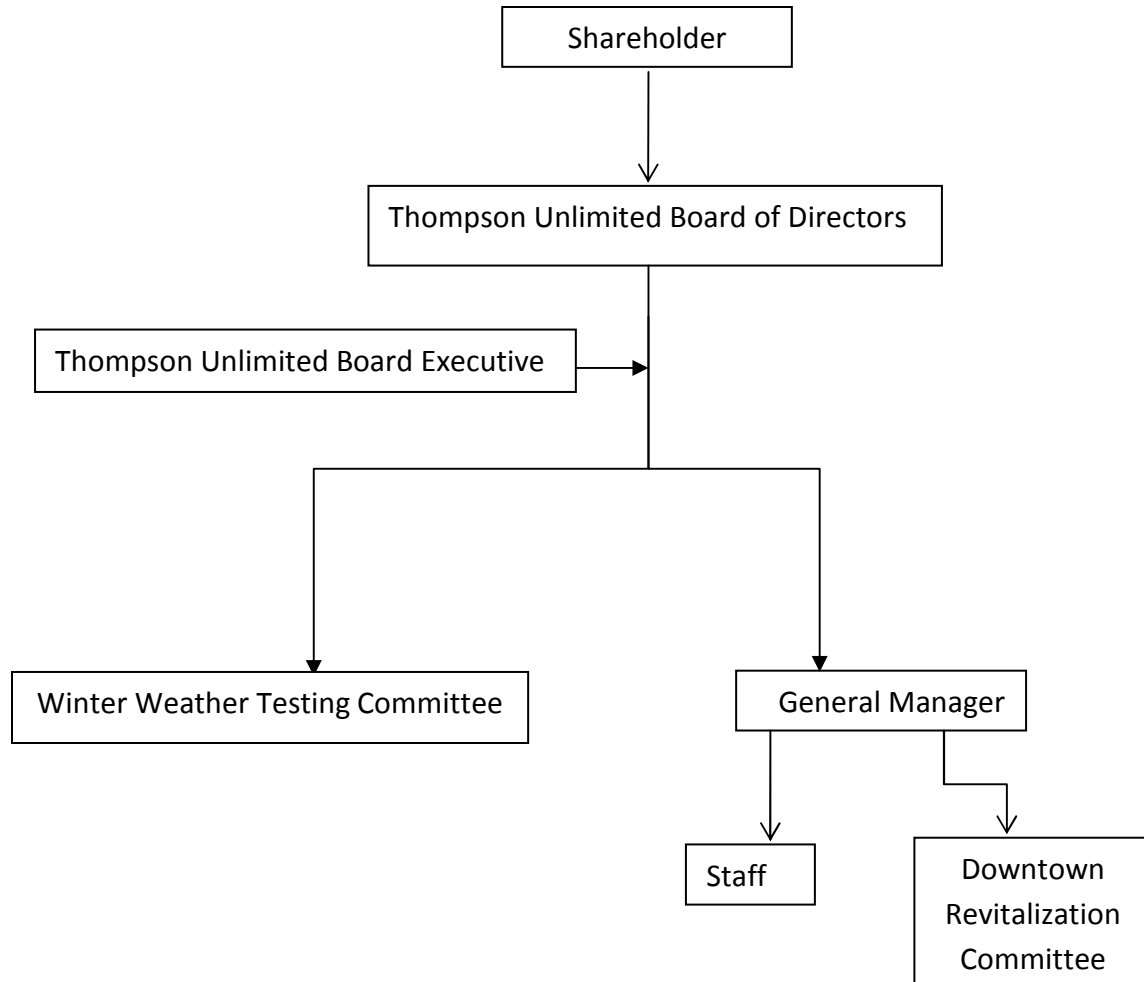
- Growing to a population of a least 25,000 people with continual growth.
- A doubling of the housing, commercial and industrial land inventory.
- A focus on the following sectors to promote growth:
 - University College of the North.
 - Health care.
 - Retail development.
 - Federal and Provincial Government Services.
 - Development of conference facilities.
 - Winter weather testing.
 - Tourism.
 - New anchor tenant.

Thompson Unlimited's Mission Statement

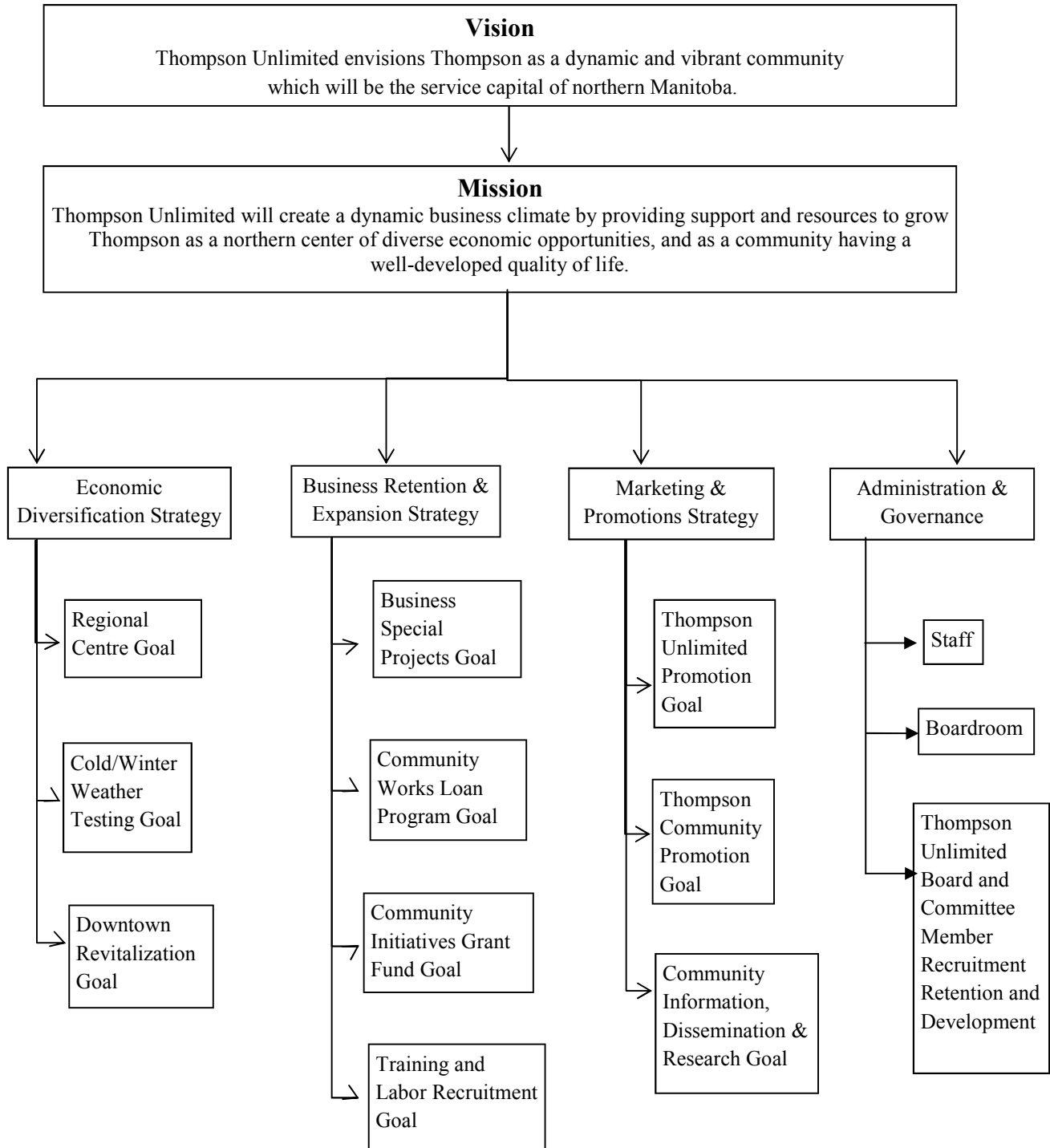
Thompson Unlimited will foster a dynamic business climate by providing support and resources to grow Thompson as a northern center of diverse economic opportunities, and as a community having a well-developed quality of life.

Toward realizing the Mission, 3 strategies have been devised and are listed in more detail along with their corresponding goals in the flowchart on Page 6.

Thompson Unlimited Organizational Flowchart



Thompson Unlimited Business Process



2009 Strategies and Goals

Three diversification strategies will be pursued in 2009. Those 3 strategies in no particular order are: (A) Economic Diversification (B) Business Retention & Expansion, and (C) Marketing & Promotions. Overseeing the implementation of the strategies are Administration & Governance. Listed below each strategy are corresponding goals.

(A) Economic Diversification Strategy

The consumption of non-renewable natural resources will eventually deplete itself over time. Without efforts to diversify or widen existing business goods, services, and incomes, the local economy will incrementally contract through the gradual depletion, or even suddenly, in response to disturbances in the interaction of supply and demand. Thompson has experienced many economic highs and lows related to the mining cycle, and extreme highs and lows are not necessarily desirable. Sustainability will help to minimize the extreme lows and highs in order to achieve more predictable functioning of Thompson's economy and its affect upon region. Three goals have been articulated: Regional Centre Concept, Cold/Winter Weather Testing, and Downtown Revitalization. Each is explained in more detail below.

Goal: Regional Centre

The region of northern Manitoba is an important consideration toward Thompsons' diversification. Education, health care, business and government services are provided locally and regional residents also access these goods and services.

- Follow and partner as appropriate in the development of the University College of the North.
- Attract new investment into the community from outside.
- Identify gaps in the provision of regional goods and/or services, and work to fill them.
- Identify barriers preventing Thompson and regional accessibility, and work to address them.
- Advance projects to enhance tourism as a four-season industry

Goal: Cold/Winter Weather Testing

Building upon the accomplishments realized through ongoing cold/winter weather testing efforts, Thompson is emerging as a premier site for real-world cold weather automotive testers as well as other manufacturers. Major automotive manufacturers along with other non-automotive manufacturers have tested products and components under harsh winter-weather conditions and different winter road surfaces through supports provided by Thompson Unlimited.

- Attract one new cold/winter weather tester to Thompson.
- Monitor and assist cold weather testers to ensure their experiences are positive so they continue

- to return to Thompson.
- Assist expanding at least one ongoing cold weather tester.
 - Implement the activities outlined in the Community Investment Support Program funding agreement.
 - Enhance testing facilities to attract further testing.

Goal: Downtown Revitalization

In cooperation with the City of Thompson, a new committee has been struck with Thompson Unlimited's participation. The objectives of the committee's work include:

- Downtown appearance.
- Increasing positive activity in the area.
- Enhancing and maintaining infrastructure.

Recommendations coming from the Final Report of the Downtown Revitalization Committee will be implemented.

(B) Business Retention and Expansion Strategy

Business retention and expansion (BR&E) promotes job growth by helping to learn of issues and concerns that businesses face, as well as opportunities. Research suggests that a significant percentage of new businesses are created by existing businesses. Further, it is widely believed that retaining an existing business is often easier than is recruiting new firms. Understanding what the current issues or opportunities are confronting local businesses, providing small business loans and pathfinding to other business development funds, offering targeted grant funding to stimulate growth and/or development, and widening training and labour availability are important features in Thompson Unlimited's Business Retention and Expansion effort. The Business Retention and Expansion strategy is divided into 4 main areas: (1) Business Retention and Expansion Special Projects, (2) Community Works Loan Program, (3) Community Initiatives Grant Fund, and (4) Training and Labor Recruitment.

Goal: Business Retention and Expansion Special Projects

Developing relationships and providing assistance to Thompson-based businesses reacting to change can contribute to assisting businesses to succeed. The information collected also helps to update the City's Community Profile, and to stay abreast with emerging issues, opportunities and challenges facing local businesses.

- Participate in various community initiatives aimed at supporting local businesses and at addressing some of their common challenges they experience
- Working with the Thompson Chamber of Commerce and other local and provincial

organizations on projects of mutual interest and concern.

Goal: Community Works Loan Program

This loan program assists the start-up or expansion of small or home-based businesses by providing microfinance loans to entrepreneurs in cooperation with other lenders or separately. Assistance with business plan preparation and small business counseling are also available through TU.

- Continue to maintain the community works loan portfolio in good standing.
- Seek transparency and accountability of the program, while balancing confidentiality.
- Put forth best efforts in assisting the development of and assessing business plans.
- Continue to promote the loan program through different avenues to raise awareness.
- Extend 1 to 3 approved loans to entrepreneurs.
- Provide ongoing business counseling to businesses approved for a loan through TU.

Goal: Community Initiatives Grant Fund

Intended to help further achieve our goals, Thompson Unlimited has developed the Community Incentive Grant Fund. The intention of this grant fund is to provide grant funding to projects that meet one or more of the TU's goals. Grant guidelines outline which projects *could* be supported through this fund, and which projects will not. All requests for grant money must be made through a completed grant application form submitted to Thompson Unlimited Board of Directors. A meeting and/or a presentation to the Thompson Unlimited Board of Directors and/or staff may be required.

- Award grant funding of \$15,000 to projects deemed to be congruent with TU's goals.
- Of special concern is the absence of an overall community development plan. Thompson Unlimited is initially supportive of the idea to support a Thompson sustainable community plan.

Goal: Training and Labor Recruitment

The shortage of workers in Thompson impedes the local economy by forcing some businesses to reduce hours, discourages investors from investing in new labour intensive businesses, and prevents existing businesses from expanding. Current labour becomes overworked, and the level of employee and customer satisfaction, as well as profitability, declines. Efficiently and effectively utilizing existing labour, attracting new labour, and training are essential components to businesses.

- Participate in efforts related to attracting new labour to Thompson.
- Address larger barriers through partnerships, such as a shortage of daycare spaces that prevent the fuller participation of the local labour force.

- Provide training to those wanting to enter the labour force, or in other cases, wanting new or additional training for labour in greater demand.

(C) Marketing and Promotion Strategy

Thompson Unlimited is the municipal economic development corporation for the City of Thompson. Raising our awareness and becoming recognized and valued for our services is priority. Marketing and promotion of Thompson Unlimited, the City of Thompson, and of development opportunities are our interests. Marketing and promotion are composed of 3 goals: (1) Promoting TU and our services, (2) Thompson Community Promotion, and (3) Community Information, Dissemination and Research.

Goal: Thompson Unlimited Promotion

We will continue to raise awareness of TU and our services within and outside Thompson by:

- Local advertising and promotion to create awareness of Thompson Unlimited in relevant and appropriate media.
- Exposures throughout the year involving local and provincial wide media outlets.
- Hosting of various conferences, forums and meetings.
- Thompson Unlimited logo usage and signage.
- Representation at conferences and meetings.
- Deliveries of community presentations.
- Raise the awareness of TU's boardroom rental availability in the community in order to increase its usage through dissemination of the brochure, website, advertising and word-of-mouth.
- Maintenance of TU websites.

Goal: Thompson Community Promotion

We live in a competitive world and Thompson must sell itself well in order to be known. Strengthening Thompson's ability to attract and retain people, and to stimulate/attract growth and development of new and existing business investment are priorities.

- Advertise, in partnership or separately.
- Exposures throughout the year involving local and wide area media outlets.
- Maintenance and creation of TU websites.

Goal: Community Information, Dissemination and Research

We will be a source of relevant and updated community information focusing on promotion and attraction-oriented information, including a photo library and a community profile, and make the information

available in a timely manner to local businesses or other groups in need of such information. Special research assignments may also be advanced from time to time.

- Continue to prepare and disseminate recruitment packages.
- Continue updating of the City of Thompson Community Profile, and Guide to Thompson Brochure, as well as other regular promotional or informational materials.
- Add to, promote and utilize the collection of professionally taken photos in TU's photo library.
- Act as a conduit in receiving, directing and fielding inquiries for media stories about Thompson's economy.
- Make known our community information resources and photo library that are easily accessible to as wide an audience as possible.
- Prepare or coordinate special reports as needed.

(D) Administration and Governance

As articulated in TU's By-Law No. 1 governing the affairs of TU, our purpose will be to support community economic and community development; diversify the local economy; support the creation and the expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises; maintain and create new employment; and, to be a partner with other agencies identified as working on behalf of northern Manitoba. Thompson Unlimited operates under the governance of the appointed volunteer board of directors and within the context of TU's work plan. Three areas form TU's administration and governance: (1) Staff, (2) Boardroom, and (3) Appointed Board and Committee Member Recruitment, Retention and Training. Presented below are the goals for each area. A Communications Protocol exists between Thompson Unlimited and the City of Thompson that will help enhance communications between both organizations.

Goal: Thompson Unlimited Staff

Attracting and retaining skilled staff and providing them with the necessary resources along with professional development opportunities to stay current in emerging issues/opportunities in development are imperative for accomplishing the goals of TU.

- Provide a workplace that is respectful of staff work/life balance.
- Recognize and reward staff efforts, contributions, and accomplishments.
- To invest in staff professional development.

Goal: Boardroom

The intention of having the Corporate boardroom is to have an equipped location where TU and other businesses can conduct their affairs properly and professionally. Making more people aware of its existence in order to increase the usage and derive its effectiveness is key to having this room. The boardroom is state-of-the-art, equipped with a wide-screen T.V., computer projector, wireless internet with laptops, kitchenette, teleconference speakerphone, spacious and tasteful meeting area, access to bathrooms and photocopier and fax, and large meeting tables with seating up to 12 persons comfortably. Boardroom availability is on a first-come, first-served basis.

- Increase in boardroom rentals over 2008.
- Distribute the Boardroom brochure to potential users.
- Boardroom rental fee can be waived on occasion so persons could experience it free the first time, and rent it in the future.
- Maintain the audio visual equipment in proper working condition.

Goal: Thompson Unlimited Board and Committee Member Recruitment, Retention and Development

Effectively engaging volunteers who give their time for board and/or committee service to accomplish TU goals by utilizing their skills and experience is a key goal. Thompson Unlimited will:

- Work to minimize board or committee member turnover.
- Ensure that on the majority of meeting occasions, quorum is achieved at board and committee meetings.
- Maintain a flow of communication between TU staff, appointed Board and Committee members.
- Recognize and value the time and expertise given to TU by appointed volunteer Board and Committee members.
- On occasion of a Board or Committee member vacancy, ensure that a process is in place to attract motivated and willing volunteers to fill a vacancy

Thompson Unlimited

2009 Operating Budget (with comparison to 2008 budget)

REVENUE (SOURCES)	2009 Budgeted Amount	2008
Allocation from Cash Reserve	75,000.00	75,200.00
Annual Operating Grant	250,000.00	250,000.00
Board room rental	2,500.00	3,000.00
CISP	32,150.00	28,000.00
Interest income	12,000.00	17,500.00
Winter Weather Testing Reimbursement	50,000.00	123,500.00
Miscellaneous	2,500.00	2,500.00
Manitoba Best	0.00	1,000.00
Downtown Revitalization	15,000.00	0.00
Thompson Community Foundation	21,820.00	20,000.00
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>\$460,970.00</u>	<u>\$520,700.00</u>

EXPENDITURES (USES)	2009 Budgeted Amounts	2008
<i>Community Development</i>		
Familiarization Tours	0.00	4,250.00
Community Initiative Grant Fund	15,000.00	15,000.00
Downtown Revitalization	15,000.00	0.00
<i>Total Community Development</i>	<u><i>\$30,000.00</i></u>	<u><i>\$19,250.00</i></u>
<i>Business Development</i>		
BR&E Software Annual Fees	1,000.00	1,000.00
Website hosting	15,000.00	1,000.00
Familiarization Tours	8,500.00	0.00
CWLP Promotion	1,500.00	3,000.00
Community Profile	800.00	1,000.00
Business Primer Brochure	500.00	500.00
Call Center Business Plan	10,000.00	0.00
<i>Total Business Development Expenses</i>	<u><i>\$37,300.00</i></u>	<u><i>\$6,500.00</i></u>
<i>Tourism Marketing and Development</i>		
Guide to Thompson	3,000.00	3,000.00
General Advertisement	5,000.00	8,000.00
Thompson Unlimited Branding Contribution	0.00	10,000.00
<i>Total Tourism Marketing and Development</i>	<u><i>\$8,000.00</i></u>	<u><i>\$21,000.00</i></u>
<i>Operating and Administrative Expenses</i>		
Subscriptions	450.00	0.00
Staff Expense	2,500.00	0.00
Accounting & Legal	3,500.00	8,000.00
Advertising & Promotions	4,500.00	1,500.00
Bad Debts	1,320.00	4,600.00
Board Meeting Expenses	1,000.00	1,000.00

EXPENDITURES (USES)	2009 Budgeted Amounts	2008
CISP Expense	64,300.00	56,000.00
Courier & Postage	800.00	500.00
Credit Card Charges	100.00	0.00
Currency Exchange & Rounding	250.00	0.00
Winter Weather Testing Reimbursement	45,000.00	107,500.00
Insurance	2,500.00	2,200.00
Interest & Bank Charges	450.00	450.00
Memberships & Licenses	1,000.00	1,000.00
Promotional Items	5,000.00	6,000.00
Miscellaneous	500.00	2,000.00
Office Supplies and Repairs	4,000.00	3,500.00
Photocopying	1,000.00	1,000.00
Photograph Library	2,000.00	3,500.00
Rent (TU)	23,000.00	23,000.00
Telephone, fax and internet	8,000.00	7,200.00
Training and professional development	3,000.00	3,000.00
Travel, Meetings and Conferences	10,000.00	12,000.00
Winter Weather Testing General Expense	35,000.00	40,000.00
Wages and benefits	140,000.00	190,000.00
Honorariums	20,000.00	0.00
Professional Development	5,000.00	0.00
Photocopier Lease	1,500.00	0.00
	<i>Total Expenses</i>	
	<u>\$385,670.00</u>	<u>\$473,950.00</u>
	TOTAL EXPENSES	
	<u>\$460,970.00</u>	<u>\$520,700.00</u>
	BUDGET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	
	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>