

# KENORA LAKE OF THE WOODS

EDAC – 2024 Marketing Canada Awards

**Winter Banners**

**CATEGORY** Promotional Item

**SUBMITTED BY** City of Kenora

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The City of Kenora is located on the shores of Lake of the Woods and its 14,522 islands in the Northwest corner of Ontario, 50 kilometres from the Manitoba border and 2 hours east of Winnipeg. It is iconic Canada – granite, pines and water. Situated on Treaty 3 territory, the City of Kenora was originally the land base of one collective First Nation community, which was separated into three communities now known as Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation, and Washagamis Bay First Nation. Kenora now sustains many others, all of whom have been welcomed to peacefully share and care for these ancestral Lands and Waters. The City's location on Lake of the Woods attracts many seasonal residents, doubling the population of the community during the summer months.

The City of Kenora delivered the 2021 Five Year Tourism and Economic Development Strategy, which identifies the objective to enhance four season visitor experiences and the tactic to deliver off-season focused programming which includes the development of a comprehensive Winter City Strategy.

In 2023, the City of Kenora engaged Wake Marketing to deliver the Winter City Strategy. Through engagement with community members, City staff and industry stakeholders, the strategy outlines three key areas – attractions and activities, marketing and promotion and events.

One of the items identified in the strategy was to develop a series of winter themed banners that could be displayed seasonally in the Harbourtown Centre, the City of Kenora downtown core. To deliver this initiative, the municipality partnered with the Harbourtown BIZ, the business improvement area, and was successful in receiving funding through the Province of Ontario Rural Economic Development Program.

The City of Kenora considered a new approach for the project rather than what had been done for previous design and development of banners. Inspired by work in other communities and instead of engaging directly with a professional firm, the City of Kenora delivered a campaign to encourage youth artists to develop banner designs. Participants aged 18 years and younger were invited to use a template that would be scaled to a lifesized banner to create their design. Young artists were encouraged to feature their favourite winter activity or experience on the banner, promoting what winter in Kenora means to them. Templates were available online, at City Hall, the Douglas Family Art Centre, the Lake of the Woods Discovery Centre and the Kenora Public Library. The Art Centre and Library hosted drop-in art sessions for youth to design their banners on site. This portion of the project was delivered in the Fall of 2023.

The City of Kenora was seeking approximately 30-45 designs for the banners that would be displayed along the Greenbelt, Main Street South and Second Street South to complement the large Main Street Christmas Tree that is erected annually.

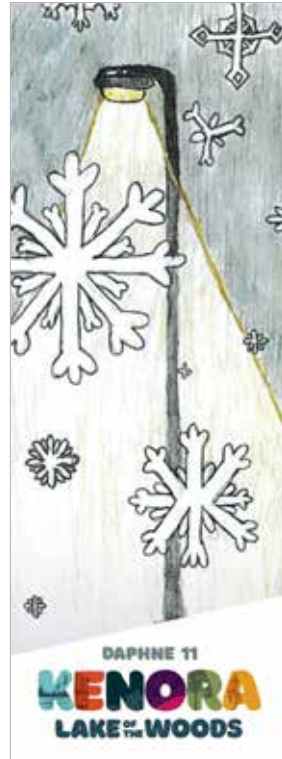
A Selection Committee comprised of staff members from the Economic Development, Tourism, Library and Art Centre departments met to choose the banner designs and worked to select 48 banners from over 300 submissions that were received. The designs were then provided to Wake Marketing who scaled the drawings to a life size street banner. The banners were installed in November 2023, in time for the community celebration to light the Main Street Christmas Tree.

The project was targeted at City of Kenora residents and visitors and assisted to meet objectives defined in the Five Year Tourism and Economic Development Strategy as well as the Winter City Strategy. Its outcomes aligned with further initiatives delivered throughout the season, including the Kenora Holiday Trail and shop local marketing.

The project was successful in meeting its objectives. The Selection Committee was overwhelmed with the number of submissions and the participation by youth artists in the community. The project was very well received by the community and was profiled on CBC Radio in an interview which featured City staff alongside youth artists whose banners were selected.



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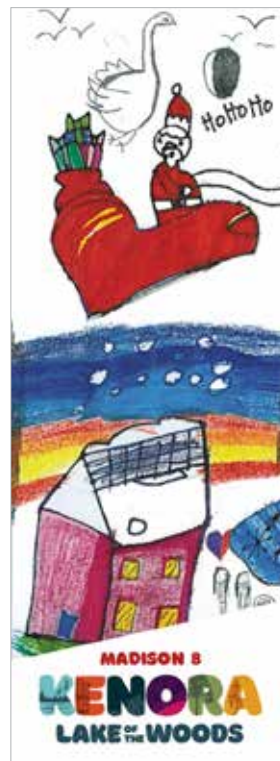
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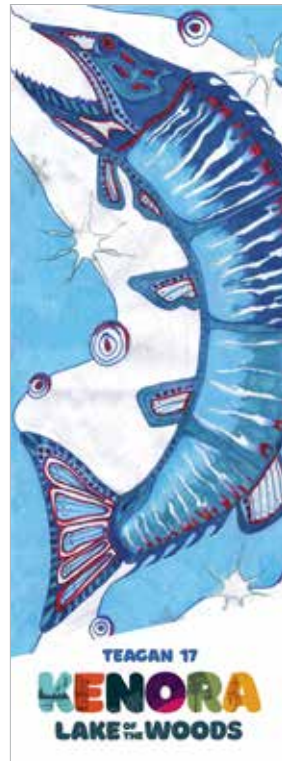
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