

Dear Residents,

I hope everyone is doing well dealing with COVID-19 and staying healthy. We are hoping that most people currently have been able to secure at least their first vaccine and are looking forward to their second dose. Once we are all fully vaccinated, we can look forward to better days to come and getting things back to normal. Thank you for doing your part to stop the spread. Since my last update, Council has been working on several initiatives to keep things moving forward in our Municipality.

Craig Davidson, Treasurer/Administrator, includes inserts with the tax bills that provide some pertinent information that will help keep you more updated. As well, we have a lot of information available to you through our email notices on [Communicate@Temagami.ca](mailto:Communicate@Temagami.ca). Please click the link to subscribe to and receive all our notices.

Big news came out recently about the Broadband Project. Staff working with Council applied to the Canadian Centre of Excellence in Next Generation Networks – CENGN. We received the news that our community was selected as one of the CENGN projects back in December, and we have been hard at work since then getting all the details worked out for the final approval and announcement that was recently released. At present, we are setting up broadband in the Community and will then turn our focus to Lake Temagami in late July.

Many times, as Mayor, I have noted that Temagami is unique given our geography and having residents of many neighbourhoods. When our Council was first elected, improved broadband service was the number one priority. Our first step was our joint investment with the Temagami First Nation for a Broadband Assessment which was completed by Amedeo Bernardi Consulting, North Bay, ON (past President of Ontera). Our Administration Team then took advantage of this plan and applied under the **CENGN Northern Ontario Residential Broadband Program**, and we were successful. We will end up with an enhanced broadband system with service levels that will meet today's needs as well as our future needs and will be available at a reasonable cost to subscribers. A good part of the Town of Temagami and surrounding area, plus Lake Temagami, will have access to this level of service. Leepfrog Telecom Ltd., from Richmond Hill, ON (the installation company) has also committed to expanding coverage once this system is in place. Leepfrog's plan is to use the Temagami project as a pilot and create similar systems in other areas within the Northeast. This investment in our communities is stepping in the right direction to support families, businesses, and communities' growth by ensuring infrastructure reliability and meeting the current demands of broadband use, especially in these unprecedented times. The project's cost is being covered and split 50% by

Leepfrog and 50% by CENGN. The Municipality's only commitment was to engage and cooperate with CENGN and Leepfrog. Now, that is a rather good deal I would say!!!!

If you are interested in finding more information about the Leepfrog service and to sign up, go to ....

[Internet Service Provider | Ontario | Leepfrog Telecom Ltd](#) ... Community information sessions will be set up soon!

The Temagami Dry Project is also moving forward. We are now working with the New Ontario Brewery from North Bay, to devise a plan to move this project into production. We are hopeful that as we develop this partnership, it will provide an excellent opportunity to move Temagami Dry forward and to create additional revenues and marketing opportunities for our community.

We also undertook a Waste Management Study. Our currently land fill sites' ownership needs to be transferred to the Municipality. Currently, we do not own this land and use it by establishing Land-use agreements with the MNRF. The Temagami Strathy landfill is also nearing its capacity and the plan to expand at that location needs further review and approval. Some additional testing, review and approvals is required. A target of increasing our diversion rate by 50% by 2031, was recommended to extend the capacity, as it will be costly to build new landfills. The study suggested that the Temagami Access Point Transfer Station site be secured using an enclosure and only available when an attendant is on site. These recommendations have been discussed in the past and will be a big change to the way we handle our waste at this location. To get a plan in place, Council approved the establishment of a Lake Community working group to see what can be done to rethink the current way we are doing things. I was approved to head up this group so stay tuned...

In terms of our Strategic Plan, we are reviewing all the suggestion and developing an implementation plan. The comments we have received from Administration and Council was that the Plan's focus was on Economic Development and should have been a little broader in scope. Economic growth is vital in a prosperous community which is why Council is taking the initiative to create an Economic Development Corporation. This new Corporation when established, will be able to focus on some of the recommended actions noted in this report. This new Corporation could also assist with the role out of the Temagami Dry Project. It will also be involved with creating a new joint Corporation with Temagami First Nation that will oversee the operation of the Lake Temagami Access Landing. Before this Council took office the MNRF informed us that the Landing Access Point was leased to us through a basic land use permit. We were advised that for us to use the landing the way we are currently, and to incorporate

our plans for this area, a new arrangement was required. The Temagami First Nation also had expressed their concerns about not having appropriate access to a landing. During meetings between the Municipality, TFN and the MNRF it was agreed that a new management/partnership arrangement for this area was required. In principle, it was agreed that a new corporation would be set up and a new land use arrangement would be worked out with the MNRF. The only way our Municipality within the Municipal Act can form this type a partnership with the TFN is to transfer this responsibility to an Economic Development Corporation, and they in turn would be allowed to establishment this new Corporation. Sometimes what looks like an easy arrangement can get complicated. Both parties are currently trying to work through the red tape needed to make this happen.

The other significant items we are working on is our Operational Review. Set out below is the list of opportunities that was presented to us. We are currently working on the list...

**MUNICIPAL SERVICE  
MUNICIPAL STRATEGY &  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**OPPORTUNITY**

- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DASHBOARD
- BUSINESS RETENTION AND ATTRACTION STRATEGY
- OPPORTUNITIES TO RETAIN POPULATION
- COLLABORATION BETWEEN TEMAGAMI COMMUNITIES AND TEMAGAMI FIRST NATIONS

**MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION**

- ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN REVIEW
- REVIEW AND UPDATE OF CURRENT HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES

**PUBLIC WORKS - ROADS**

- ASSESSMENT OF KEY ROADS & CONDITIONS

## **RECREATION**

- RECREATION STRATEGY & INITIATIVES ARENA

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES PUBLIC WORKS - WASTE MANAGEMENT DIGITAL STRATEGY**

FIRE DEPARTMENTS  
ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT  
WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- ONLINE PRESENCE
- DIGITAL STRATEGY TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND ONLINE SERVICES

## **SERVICE LEVELS**

ESTABLISHMENT AND  
FORMALIZATION OF SERVICE  
LEVELS

## **TOURISM FEES AND TAXES**

TOURISM STRATEGY  
REVENUE-GENERATION  
OPPORTUNITIES

To date, we have also set up a Recreation Group, which will look at working on a Recreational Strategy. Part of this work will help decide “what and how” we use our Community Recreation Centre. A big issue here relates to the question of whether we should maintain an arena or not. There are a lot of different opinions about this, but we do need to have this conversation.

We have also completed an Organizational Review which Council recently approved.

Over the last few years, our Administration staffing numbers have been reduced. Within this new structure, two positions are currently vacant, and the requirement of the roles will be further assessed as we work through our operational review. Council approval will be required to fill these positions. From an administration standpoint, we are incredibly fortunate to have the Team that we have. They are a hard-working group and are also working hard to meet the current job requirements. If they have things to learn, they are up to the task by taking additional courses and/or seeking assistance when and where needed. From a Council perspective, we are trying to perform the role that Council is supposed to do. We were not elected to be the ones running the Community. We were elected to set direction

and make sure that things get done. I know traditionally in small Towns there is a feeling that Council should have a greater role in operations. Administration oversight is the Treasurer/Administrator's job, and I feel strongly that we have someone in place that is working hard and is doing a good job. No one in this line of work is perfect, but regardless we need to ensure that everyone in our community shows respect and good judgement towards all the good people we have working for us. We as a Council also have a responsibility to make sure we do the same.

One area we do plan to improve upon is Communication. Our email communicate system has been a success and having people attending meetings via Zoom has also helped. We are planning to make available Council meeting summary updates and get accurate information posted regarding all the things we are working on, out to you on our Web and Facebook page. Also, I do have an email account called [askthemayor@temagami.ca](mailto:askthemayor@temagami.ca) set out so people could ask questions. I do not think I have ever received any questions, but I am happy to share this information if anyone would like to take advantage of this. There are many items that Council is dealing with to improve our community and we want out residents to feel positive about the future.

An area that I do not really like getting too involved is Planning and especially in Temagami. But as Mayor, I do have a responsibility between now and when this term ends to get the Official Plan review completed. I know this is a complicated item and we want a process that is straight forward. Council as a whole early in our term decided to be more directly involved in this process and not to rely on previous structures, and it is their right to do so. I do think there is an opportunity to simplify our current plan and believe me, I have heard on many occasions and from many different sources, our plan is far more complicated than it needs to be. We need to look some restrictions i.e., roof pitch on boat houses, and the need to allow for appropriate Fire Smart provisions in our plan. Are we going to allow any main land development, and will we find any loopholes in the provinces lake trout cold water lakes policy? **NO**, and to those who are trying to get others excited for no reason, please stop and I ask everyone to please review our process, get your comments and feed back to us as requested, and we can then get to work and focus on the actual work at hand. Yes, there will be disagreements, and again I ask you to respect everyone who is part of this process and hopefully we can get a plan together that we all can live with.

We have also been dealing with two complicated issues. The first one is our requirement to support Au-Chateau a Long-term Care Home located in West Nipissing. Our Residents never use the facility, and it came to a head this year with a 16% increase in our yearly levy, that we are required to pay. The expiry of the "102 Special Funding" agreement, caused a reduction in their funding that amounted to

\$658,000.00 per year. In turn, The Board of Management of Au Château increased the amount payable by each supporting municipality, being the municipalities of West Nipissing and Temagami, to cover this funding gap. These actions resulted in a 16 % annual increase in our yearly levy that needed to be covered within our operating costs, which means our proposed total 2021 levy is now \$401,986.00.

Besides this issue, there is still a plan to redevelop Au Chateau and we can see what is happening in North Bay, and we will be on the hook for some of this cost once a redevelopment of Au Chateau gets the go ahead. We cannot afford to continue with this relationship. However, getting out of this is complicated and will have its risks, but we need to take a stand. We have had discussions with the Ministry of Long-term care, but they agree this situation is not appropriate but have not come back with any solutions. Past Councils have investigated this but have never taken a stand as they were always concerned about what would happen to the local home support program. We recently learnt that none of Temagami's levy goes toward the support of the local home support program, and it is funded 100% by the Ministry. We have not discussed this item in open session lately as we were seeking Legal advice on this, however, our plan will be set out soon. In the interim, we agreed to continue to make our payments at the same level as last year.

The other tricky item we have been working through is ensuring compliance with our planning documents, most notably the Official Plan, the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law, and the Property Standards By-Law. In the simplest of these, it could still be 18 months from the time they first hit the system to when they are resolved. We have had some that have been ongoing for years and started prior to this term of Council. The recent amendment to the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law for Home Occupation and Home Industry was the result of one of these. Another has involved seeking legal advice, working with the Province as they also have involvement in the matter and this issue is still ongoing. Council's and in fact, my position is clear. Our planning requirements apply to all equally. There should be no properties not paying their fair share as determined through MPAC assessments and if there are properties that are not appropriately assessed, we will work with MPAC until they are. There is nothing personal, but we must approach matters from the perspective of fairness of all.

As you can see, we have been busy, but there is still a lot we still need to do, such as...  
Get the water and sewage issues resolved in Temagami North at a cost the users can afford. Once settled, we can open some of the unsold housing lots in this area and we are hand cuffed until this happens. Hopefully, the smoke tests and camera work will help us deal with the water infiltration problem. We will be installing the UV system now required for the lagoon sewer system, and the work needed on the 2

water towers. It would be nice to get some government funding for this, but our past requests have been ignored. We will continue trying, but in the meantime, we have taken advantage of the low interest rates offered to Municipalities for capital projects like this. We plan on getting this work done soon and cover the cost through a long-term loan. We must meet some deadlines set out by the various Ministries, so waiting is not an option.

The expansion and development of the industrial park is another item we are working on. We have no lots left, and there is a need to finalize the roadway through the area and find ways to expand. We have had some meetings with Government officials about possible expansion of that area, including some use of the old Sherman Mine site. We are awaiting another meeting to go over some of the potential areas. Regardless this will take some time, but we are trying to get this resolved.

We also need to find other areas for possible development of new residential lots. Temagami South is one possibility, but the rock conditions create challenges, and the mining sector still controls some lands. One area that may have some potential is the Fire Tower Area. We understand there was work done in the past around developing this area and we feel there may be some merit to see what can be done with this now. We have an old ski chalet there and who knows what could develop if we had a plan and a few individuals looking to invest.

In terms of roads, everyone knows that a goal of mine was to get funds to fix up the Temagami Access Road. We came close to getting substantial funding. However, we need to refine our plan and make it more realistic if we ever want to get some funding for this. Fox Run is also in need of repairs, and we will find a way to address this.

As you can see, we do have a lot on the go and hope to get at most of this in time. However, we have also been doing this work and are keeping our operational costs and budgets in line.

I do hope this report gives you a better idea of what your Council has been doing and what it plans to do, until we turn this responsibility over to another Council. All Councils need to do more to keep people better informed and I hope this letter has helped. I am always open for suggestions and will continue to provide updates as we move forward.

Thanks DAN O