



DIALOGUE ON THE FUTURE

“Let’s talk about what is happening in our community”. This sincere message from Mayor Anne Krassilowsky reflects the attitude at City Hall after the recent announcement of the permanent closure of the Paper Operations at the Domtar mill in Dryden. As the City Leaders assess the impact, Mayor Krassilowsky emphasizes that *“Community collaboration, communication and support for each other is the best way we can move to a sustainable economy. This City was built on the strength of its people, with a vision for growth and opportunity and today, we need to renew that vision, and together build, with determination, and our combined strength, to a better and more secure future through a diversified economy”*.

The City of Dryden is challenged on more than one financial front.

At the local level, our major employer has been forced to restructure. On the larger international stage, the world is combating a serious economic recession.

The challenge for our City, as well as for many of the communities across Northwestern Ontario, the Province, Canada and around the world is to meet those challenges the very best way we can.

Dryden has survived a number of downturns in the past and we need to recognize that a new diversified economy is where our future economic recovery lies.

Dryden is strategically located at the convergence of highways, rail and air corridors. We have the land to build on, the infrastructure to support it, the transportation to deliver those products and services and we certainly have the skilled workforce to bring it all together.

We are in the very centre of Sunset Country and we are surrounded by the natural resources the world needs today and in the future.

There is every reason to believe that retention and recruitment for existing and new jobs is possible and, there is reason to believe that we and the market will recover again.

And with that firm conviction in mind, the City of Dryden and your Council created the Dryden Development Corporation (DDC). We each have a new Strategic Plan to guide and channel our efforts. These plans focus on creating jobs and wealth and are aimed at moving us forward aggressively.

At the present time there are a number of diversification projects underway at varying stages of development such as:

- **Alternative energy:** We are negotiating with interested companies and government ministries to generate solar and bio mass power. This is an opportunity to create power to help ourselves, with our own sources and best of all, we can build and produce it here in Dryden.
- **Value added forest products:** We are working with government and regional partners to enter the forest products industry in areas other than conventional pulp and paper. Research is ongoing. The wood industry will look different in the future but it is a renewable resource based industry and we will find new things to do with it and keep that value in Dryden. In the meantime, we will continue to support and work with Domtar, the Provincial and Federal Governments in keeping our mill viable.
- **Mining:** There are more than 70 mining and exploration companies actively exploring this area for valuable minerals that the world needs. We are excited that these companies are finding those minerals in and

around Dryden. The City of Dryden owns some of these claims and they are being worked and explored. We are committed and will continue to proactively assist all companies during their exploration for minerals and we'll support them when those resources are mined, here in Dryden.

- **Tourism:** In spite of the recent downturn in the economy, the Dryden area will continue to serve traditional fishing and hunting enthusiasts, while exploring opportunities in ecotourism, attracting a new five-star hotel complex, and building a new tourist information centre, here in Dryden. Dryden has the opportunity to be a sports tourism hub for Northwestern Ontario. Our base assets are already in place and with further development and enhanced investment improvements we can grow these facilities to meet the community needs as well as those of the sports enthusiasts across Northwestern Ontario.
- **Education and Training:** With the rapid changes in technology, the Canadian workforce requires new and ongoing upgrading of knowledge and skills. Dryden has a strong commitment to education and training and is seeking approval to expand its local program

offerings. Specifically, displaced workers and others will have an opportunity to re-train and enhance their skill sets here, in Dryden. We continue to work with Confederation College and the Province to ensure that training takes place at home.

- **Healthcare:** The Dryden Regional Health Centre is currently building and installing a Ct-Scan on-site. That means medical service for City and area residents right here at home as well as support for the Dryden Health Care professionals and our fine hospital.
- Also, Dryden is addressing the shortage of nurses by offering training and upgrading courses for nurses here in Dryden. Training here in Dryden means you and your families can keep your homes and continue to live in your community of choice.
- We are also working hard to assist with the recruitment and retention of physicians and other medical professionals, in order to continue to have a community that can and does provide quality health care for its citizens here, in Dryden.
- **Investment Attraction:** The DDC has recently launched its “best of class” web site www.ExploreDryden.ca, a critical investment

attraction tool in the global market place. This valuable resource is designed to captivate Site Selectors' interests in our regional community. Additional downloadable brochures, pamphlets, studies, market analysis and sell sheets can be found on the site, as well as links and resources for small business start ups and entrepreneurs. Business events and activities can be added to the online Events Calendar to promote partnering organizations' workshops and training sessions.

- **Other Government Ministries:** Dryden is in ready contact with Provincial and Federal Government Ministries to problem-solve, plan, and seek financial assistance for major projects here, in Dryden.
- Dryden appreciates the support of the Provincial - Northern Ontario Heritage Corporation Fund (NOHFC) in the past and can be assured that projects that meet the funding requirements will receive the same support in the future. We currently have an application into NOHFC for 1/3 of the build of the Centennial Business Park.
- Dryden continues to benefit from the funding support of FedNor. We have received funding for GIS, City revitalization in the past and we

see that support continuing. We currently we have an application for 1/3 of the funding needed to build our Centennial Business Park.

- **Amongst Dryden's most precious resources is our citizens.** We are Volunteer rich and have enjoyed the success and support of so many in order for projects to come to fruition. Together we will continue this success story.
- While the City of Dryden and the DDC are moving forward with these strategic plans and projects, community groups and individuals are strongly encouraged to keep those new ideas coming forward and to participate in developmental projects. *“Amidst the tough times, we do have a lot going for us here in Dryden. We have a bright future and working together we will diversify our community to a better and more secure future.”*

In the next few weeks officials from Council and the DDC will commit to regular communication with the community on our strategic priorities. This may take various forms including presentations with the media and public community consultations. Ongoing meetings with Domtar officials will take

place and the community will be informed on any significant progress.

Citizens with comments, suggestions and ideas are encouraged to forward them at any time to City Hall or generalinquiries@dryden.ca or in writing to The City of Dryden, 30 Van Horne Avenue, Dryden, ON P8N 2A7.

Mayor Anne Krassilowsky