

February 2024



## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

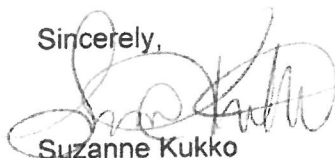
Dear Community Members,

It's hard to believe our Council has now been in office for just over a year now. My son asked me a few weeks ago – **what have you guys done since you've been in office?** It's a great question, and I found it hard to rattle things off. It has been such a busy time of learning and doing, it's hard to remember everything we've accomplished, and the community isn't always aware of it. So, I decided to take the time to write it all down and now I'd like to share it with you. Although it is Council that may kick-start initiatives and projects, it is the staff that puts in the work to make it all happen. I am proud of what Council and staff have accomplished over the past 15 months. The goal of this Council is ALWAYS to improve our community as a whole, moving us forward and upward into a bright and prosperous future.

And the future is looking bright, indeed. We were especially excited to see the announcement that a \$37 million Parks Canada Administration and Visitor Centre will be built at our marina, with shovels going in the ground this spring. Not only will this bring more tourists to our town long-term, but there will also be a huge economic impact for our community over the next two years related to the construction of the building itself.

If you have any questions, I encourage you to contact a council member or relevant staff person.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Kukko

Mayor

Township of Nipigon

-Asking OPP to re-instate a dedicated Drug Officer (CSCU) based out of the Nipigon detachment.

### ***Economic/Community Development***

-Developed a new bidding process for NCC canteen such that there are two options (full service and event service) with minimum bids that are fair market value. This aligns with the Municipal Act and increased Township lease revenue by 30% compared to past years.

-Mayor nominated Thunder Bay District Municipal League Conference to be held in Nipigon (for the first time), resulting in economic impact for accommodations, restaurants and legion February 29-March 1, 2024.

-Developing a Strategic Plan for Nipigon – with only 2% of project cost paid by Nipigon taxpayers.

-Hiring of Special Events Intern.

-Worked with SG Community Living to continue to employ their client at the community centre when his funding was no longer available.

-Investigating implementation of the Municipal Accommodations Tax (MAT) which is charged to motel guests, outside revenue that can be used for economic and community development initiatives.

-Instituting fees for boat launch (reduced rate for residents), aligning with all other marinas on the north shore of Lake Superior. Revenue to be used for marina improvement projects.

-Hosted a town hall meeting to gather input on issues of ATV use within the Township

### ***Green Initiatives***

-Re-establishment of electronic recycling program, diverting electronics from our landfill.

-Installation of Sic Sox Circular (pink box) at recycling depot to divert textiles/clothing in poor condition from our landfill.

-Establishment of an annual Mayor's Clean-Up in May with schools

-Butt container at Community Centre

### ***Infrastructure/Public Works***

-Purchase of street sweeper

-Paving of end of McKirdy Ave.

-Increase industrial dumping fees at landfill (ie, asbestos disposal) to align with what it costs the Township to deal with these materials. Fees are aligned with what other landfills charge.

-Working on improvement of purchasing/procurement policies to increase value for taxpayers' dollars, including using Canoe, a non-profit procurement service that can potentially save the town thousands of dollars when purchasing large ticket items, such as vehicles and equipment.

-Installation of fire alarm at museum.

-Removal of overgrown trees and shrubs in residential areas of downtown.

## **HIGHLIGHTS - Initiatives Completed/Underway Since December 2023-Present**

### ***Transparency***

- Implemented the posting of council packages on our website, recording and posting of regular council meetings online.
- Holding town hall budget public meeting and conducting a 2024 public budget survey, giving community members opportunity for input on annual capital budget.
- Following Integrity Commissioner's recommendation to strengthen Nipigon's Council Code of Conduct. In process of rewriting Code of Conduct and passing it as a bylaw, which will make it a permanent policy.
- Held an information session for motel owners/managers about the Municipal Accommodations Tax.

### ***Beautification***

- Passing of a by-law to remove signage from "dummy policeman" intersection for proper snow removal and improved appearance of downtown.
- Approval of installation of Superior Country Norval Morrisseau/Indigenous Group of Seven Interpretive Panel at the Bridgeview Lookout
- Removal of graffiti on lookout tower, removal of outdated map sign from lookout area
- Replacement of flags on the municipal building, removal of street banners over winter to extend shelf life
- Painting of "dummy policeman"

### ***Administration/Policy***

- Hiring of dedicated part-time By-Law Enforcement Officer.
- Expanding Edge Arts Coordinator position from 10 hours to 20 hours per week, resulting in more programming, a better job for a community member, and improved ability to recruit for the position.
- Development and implementation of a municipal staff Exit Interview policy to help improve workplace and employment conditions for more successful employee retention.
- Development and implementation of a strategy for collecting marina fees (camping, etc.) including honour system (sandwich board and cash box) and online booking, resulting in collection of \$16,000 in summer of 2023, a record for marina revenue despite the RV parking area being closed.
- Working on improvement of outside storage container bylaw, allowing the containers to be on commercial highway property and in town, with restrictions, as opposed to complete ban of all containers.

### ***Advocacy***

- Delegation at 2023 ROMA with MTO to advocate for improvement of highway maintenance.
- Delegation at 2023 ROMA with Attorney General and OPP Commissioner about Bail Reform. Mayor wrote letter to Premiere Ford to support our position – part of intense political pressure that resulted in the passing of Bill C-48 An Act To Amend the Criminal Code (Bail Reform)

