

Dubreuilville (Canada): A Strategic Action Plan for a Rural Community

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The town of Dubreuilville, with a population of just under 1,000, is located in Northern Ontario, Canada, approximately one thousand kilometers North-West of Toronto. The region was previously known for lumber production. When the Canadian lumber market collapsed due to the imposition of duties by Washington, the local mill shut down. Large gold deposits were found nearby, and Dubreuilville became a mining town almost overnight. Half of the population had left by the time the mine opened, and part of the workforce commutes from cities located up to six-hour drives away. With the opening of a second gold mine in the area planned for 2023, Dubreuilville had to prepare to attract and retain more workers for the project to succeed and for the town to prosper. Below is the strategic plan that was prepared by Mayor Nantel and Economic Development Officer Melanie Pilon, with the help of a Laurentian University Management professor and three students.

Keywords: rural communities, town planning, municipal planning, rural exodus, youth retention, rural entrepreneurship, agriculture, remote communities, towns, mining, lumber, indigenous communities, cultural tourism, nature-based tourism, eco-tourism, worker attraction, worker retention, economic diversification

COMMENTS

When we were hired, the company would provide housing, we were comfortable – our travel expenses were covered... Léandre Moore, Councillor, The Corporation of the Township of Dubreuilville.

Some people are stuck in the old trailer image... we also need to reinvent our website... another issue is how much are citizens willing to pay to keep some activities, for example, the curling club in Wawa is down to 9 teams... Beverly Nantel, Mayor, The Corporation of the Township of Dubreuilville.

We do not want to repeat previous projects that just die on the shelf... we need concrete actions that will generate measurable results... A community perspective should be the priority ... Economic Development should have a dedicated position. Pat Dubreuil, Director, Corporation du Développement Économique et Communautaire de Dubreuilville (CDEC) & Local Entrepreneur.

There is a lot of local in-house training required for entry-level positions in the mine... Carly Gagnon, HR, Alamos Mine.

It's hard to keep up... we get stuff dropped on us by the Federal / Province... we're all busy in our own little lives... Shelley Casey, CAO/Clerk, The Corporation of the Township of Dubreuilville.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

This document has a wide range of contents, particularly from benchmarking activities that allowed the discovery of a wide range of successful actions already taken in other rural areas to attract and retain working people, including Canadians, immigrants, and younger citizens, including families with teens. Below are a few recommendations considered potentially effective:

Further useful implementation details can be found in the Action Plan section.

PRIORITIES

The main priorities are all-important and need attention; They include broadband communications, housing, labor, the website, and tourism.

Action and Special Recommendation

Acting on the above priorities means in part looking at how they fit into broader categories. For example, thanks to the current limited-term Economic Development position incumbent, broadband communications are already in the process of being developed through a \$ 3 million forthcoming project that will result in creating a basic infrastructure necessary for all other priorities.

While the other four priorities are interrelated, labor and housing are dependent on action relative to Employment and Immigration issues (a concern for employers, i.e., businesspeople, but also unions and municipal authorities for housing, social, recreational, and general services), as well as recruitment and training issues. Improving the web site and tourism infrastructures are also both related to general municipal services and the tourism sector. All of these priorities also have something to do with Economic Development and diversification. Yet, there is currently no permanent position existing in Dubreuilville to coordinate the activities related to these priorities.

It is therefore especially recommended:

To create, as early as feasible, a position of Economic Development Officer for the Dubreuilville Township within the 2019-2024 Planning horizon, to guarantee that economic development priorities adopted by CDEC and the Township of Dubreuilville will be acted upon

Recommendations

As these recommendations are all important, there was no reason for numbering them, but they are identified by letters to facilitate their referencing.

- A. Pursue the ongoing opportunity of working with the Director for Employment and Immigration within the Société Économique de l'Ontario** (Directeur Immigration & Employabilité - Société Économique de l'Ontario) to attract Francophone workers from countries from the Francophonie into currently available positions. *(There are 54 countries or regions that are full members, 4 are associated members, and 26 have an observer status; these 84 jurisdictions self-define as «members» of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, or OIF)* – Discuss the possibility of a presentation by someone from the SEO around the same time as the Strategic Plan 2019-2024 will be presented.
- B. Develop an immigration strategy, focused on French-speaking countries.** This would include developing successful newcomer attraction and retention services and related activities that would ensure that the strategy remains successful in the long term.
- C. Develop a 4-Season Tourism Strategy** focusing on the Mooseback Trail System. Integrate technology and a social media-linked component to help attract Millennial tourists. Consider photo-friendly upgrades to the town. i.e. façade improvements, lighting, street art that speaks to the local history, etc. – “Attracting Millennial Tourists with a Photo-Friendly Town in the Age of Instagram”.
- D. Develop a Communications/ Marketing Strategy.** Consider several stages depending on the availability of provincial funding dollars. 1) Self-Funding a website with content produced in-house, including the important land/real estate inventory/database. 2) Obtain funding to create a community-specific long-term marketing/communications strategy. 3) Participate in any region-wide marketing /communications strategies.
- E. Ensure that we (Representatives of the Township of Dubreuilville et al) are active participants on regional/provincial/federal boards, committees, and panels.** If we are not present and active to advocate on issues that are important to us, we cannot trust other municipalities/groups to represent and address our concerns. Action Steps to Change: Incorporate attending key events such as ROMA, FONOM, EDAC/EDCO, PDAC, etc. Perhaps decide during the budgetary process/business planning process and determine which events we want to attend and why. Plan to send a delegation with a key message.
- F. Conducting an organizational and operational review is critical.** The process will identify best practices as well as identify areas of improvement and potential areas where we can become more efficient. See Windsor benchmark (Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada, 2021).
- G. Completion of a Community Improvement Plan** by the Township of Dubreuilville. This would allow the Township to offer incentives in any recruitment and attraction programs that they offer. This could also include incentives being offered to those wishing to build homes. Specifically, the Township may want to consider implementing a Rental House Community Improvement Plan similar to Sault Ste. Marie (SSM). Developing a partnership/mentoring arrangement with the City of SSM may assist the Township of Dubreuilville to attract developers interested in investing or cost-sharing a project.
- H. Advocate and lobby for Canada Post to implement a plan to incorporate financial services at postal offices** in rural and isolated communities.

- I. Advocate and lobby Queen's Park to create sustainable rural communities** (recommendations in line with those benchmarked in the *Alberta MLA Rural Opportunities Report*).
- J. Develop a strategy for the Youth**, along with the recommended Action Plan Recommendations in this report.
- K.** The development of a **Cultural Festival**, which would include music, as well as games, dances, and other activities, possibly a pow-wow on a nearby First nation, could be a way of creating summer action to showcase Dubreuilville.

PROLOGUE

In the Opinion page of the December 2018 edition, *Sudbury Mining Solutions Journal* Editor Norm Tollinsky observed that children raised in Southern Ontario are mostly exposed to teachers, nurses, doctors, and bus drivers in terms of examples of occupations they might consider when they grow up. Conversely, he sees it highly unlikely that engineers, geologists, millwrights, welders, and miners would populate the dreams of the recently born Alpha Generation. Yet, the Mining Industry Human Resources Council expects the Canadian mining industry to need to hire up to 130,000 workers between now and 2029. Tollinsky went on to describe how his 6-year-old grandson became enthused by watching underground mining operations videos on YouTube: « I never imagined that mining videos could compete with Peppa the Pig or Bob the Builder... » The next summer, while visiting Sudbury, the boy had a chance to visit Dynamic Earth, which was the highlight of his summer.

MANDATE AND STRATEGIC PLAN OUTLINE

The mandate given to Jean-Charles Cachon by CDEC was to cover the following for this plan:

Situation

The primary goal of this project was to create a comprehensive community economic strategic plan that can be used primarily by the CDEC to govern its economic development agenda for 2019-2024. The secondary goal was to have vital groups, including the Township of Dubreuilville formally adopt and publically support the plan.

Deliverables

A Preliminary Report was circulated before a Town Hall Meeting that took place on November 1, 2018. The final report was expected to include a Community Mission and Vision, a Review of past reports regarding the Dubreuilville Township, A SWOT / PESTEL Analysis, i.e.: a) Environmental scan: Opportunities and Threats and b) Internal analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses of Dubreuilville, an Action plan and Recommendations for action. The action plan was expected to include practical recommendations including benchmarks from similar situations in other communities in Canada and elsewhere.

Process Issues: Public Meetings

Two meetings were to be organized with the community, a Town Hall meeting to gather primary information from citizens (November 2018) and a public presentation of the final report (January 2019). Students were present at both meetings, along with Professor J.-C. Cachon.

INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Plan is about Dubreuilville future in terms of how its citizens vision it and have determined to shape it in such a way that it can continue to transform itself. Future developments at social, economic, educational, health care, recreational, and community levels will contribute to the continued prosperity of Dubreuilville citizens.

This plan is not a list of tasks to be executed one after the other from 2019 to 2024. It rather describes future possible actions identified by the people of Dubreuilville to address emergent priority problems and situations for 2019-2024. Specific short-term issues such as planning for new developments, sewer repairs, and other municipal management-related projects correspond to the normal daily activity of the Township and are beyond the scope of this study. Therefore, these short-term plans are not discussed here, but their importance is recognized and well-understood.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES BY LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY'S FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT (LUFOM) TEAM

Professor J.-C. Cachon contacted three of his best-performing upper-year students in August 2018, and they immediately started reviewing documents provided by CDEC, as well as other data sources. They also met with persons of interest throughout the four months from mid-August to December 2018. J.-C. Cachon and the students had teleconferences with the Economic Development Officer, two of them including CDEC and Dubreuilville Township Council members on September 21, and on October 1, 2018. The LUFOM Team submitted a Preliminary Report on October 29, 2018, which included some questions in anticipation of the Town Hall meeting.

On November 1, 2018, a Town Hall meeting was held in Council Chambers and attended in person by the four members of the LUFOM Team. Subsequently, a meeting was held at Town Hall on the morning of November 2, to compare notes about the previous day's meeting and plan the remainder of the activities leading to the Strategic Plan. Several key issues appeared to have been clarified in terms of the practical aspects related to the execution of a strategic plan.

As this « final » report is being drafted, it is important to be conscious of the fact that its contents have been mainly driven by community members, this is why their names appear on top of the title page. By making decisions every day, over the next five years, they will render parts of this document obsolete, however, what will remain on the back of their minds, will be a common vision, mission, and general scope agreed upon in the pages below. Projects will come and go, some will change, successes will come, expected or not, possibly what might look like failures – nevertheless, the direction will now be likely to remain the same, as Dubreuilville will have « A Plan »!

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Dubreuilville: Vision

A prosperous, vibrant, and healthy rural Township of Dubreuilville, able to adapt to a changing world and to offer diverse opportunities and a high quality of life to all its citizens (Le Canton de Dubreuilville est un milieu rural en bonne santé, vibrant et prospère, capable de s'adapter à un monde en changement et d'offrir à tous ses citoyens des opportunités variées et une qualité de vie supérieure).

Dubreuilville: Mission

Diversify and strengthen Dubreuilville's economic base through sustainable development; improve the quality and range of municipal and community services, and the quality and diversity of housing opportunities, while maintaining a high quality of life in a close link to its wilderness setting. Thanks to municipal services the Township of Dubreuilville will endeavor to foster the social, community, and economic conditions necessary for the whole population to prosper (Diversifier et renforcer l'économie de Dubreuilville par le développement durable ; Maintenir une qualité de vie élevée en lien étroit avec un milieu pleinement naturel tout en améliorant la qualité et l'éventail de services municipaux et communautaires, ainsi que la que la qualité et la diversité des possibilités de logement. Grâce à ses services municipaux, le Canton de Dubreuilville facilitera les conditions sociales, communautaires et économiques permettant à toute la population de prospérer).

Shared Values Among Canadians

The Federal Government's website about Canadian identity revealed the results of a national consultation as part of the General Social Survey (GSS) by Statistics Canada (2013) among citizens just before the 150th anniversary of the Canadian Confederation: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2015005-eng.htm> The values described as being shared by a large majority of Canadians were: « *In 2013, the overwhelming majority of people believed that Canadians collectively shared the values of human rights (92%), respect for the law (92%), gender equality (91%)... and Ethnic and cultural diversity (85%) as well as respect for Aboriginal culture (68%)* ».

Review of Past Reports Regarding the Dubreuilville Township

Eleven reports dealing with specific aspects of the municipality were produced between 2013 and the end of 2018. The SWOT-PESTEL analyses below are based on these reports, as well as on comments made during teleconferences and at the November 1, 2018, Town Hall Meeting. More details from past reports that were found useful have been assembled under *Appendix 1 – Facts and data from past reports*.

SWOT-PESTEL ANALYSES

External Analysis: Opportunities and Threats (Related to Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal Environments)

The Town Hall meeting of November 1st 2018, first appeared to have ended where other similar discussions had arrived in the past, i.e. similar problems were recurrent in terms of labor shortage, available land, housing issues, spousal employment issues, availability of space, schooling issues, isolation-related issues concerning attracting people, including immigrants, plus wider-ranging problems such as the unavailability of broadband Internet. This latter issue alone is a hindrance to communications and Internet-based solutions, notably for financial services such as banking.

Despite such an appearance of being confronted by recurring problems, there was also a realization that several actors were at play on the Dubreuilville Township scene, and that important changes had occurred in our lives. Over the past ten years, we had to learn to live without the company providing us with heat and electricity, new employers came, and another one is in this process at the moment, Alamos is expanding; among the population, the proportion of people staying in the community has increased; some infrastructure renovations (sewers) are required, however in general terms Dubreuilville looks attractive (the Four Seasons Trail alone looks like an invitation to stay): all in all, it's as if a spark was missing to ignite this town into long-lasting, vibrant fireworks. To achieve this, we suggest having, first, a glance at current actions that could result in big, positive changes, then start discussing some ideas towards an action plan for 2019-2024.

It is also important to complete the tasks already underway, before taking on additional priorities, given the limited resources we have available. A focused scope should allow for greater results achieved at the end of the 2019-2024 term.

Threats

Labor Shortages in Mining - In an in-depth study of the mining sector, the Far Northeast Training Board estimated a shortage of 2,819 people in the region from 2017 to 2027, with an expected creation of 887 positions. More recently, the Mining Industry Human Resources Council / Conseil des ressources humaines de l'industrie minière *Canadian Mining Labor Report 2019* released on November 16, 2018, expected shortages mostly due to retirements, as mining automation was expected to result in a modest increase in the total number of positions. 97,450 new mining hires were expected across Canada from 2019 to 2029. There were anecdotal reports about individual small firms that had difficulties recruiting skilled trades specialists such as welders and millwrights (Sudbury Mining Solutions Journal, Dec. 1, 2018).

Tourism. In the sector of Tourism, the 2015 *Tourism Labor Market Initiative Algoma/North Central & Northwest Ontario* report identified the following professions as experiencing labor recruitment problems within the industry: Kitchen staff / qualified cooks, Housekeeping/cleaners, Maintenance /

general laborers, Guides, among retailers, finding employees to stay on for at least a year (very high turnover), Keyholders who can be responsible for opening/closing business, Professional servers due to lack of training, Qualified sales & service personnel. It was also noted in this regional report that small towns had an increasingly difficult time retaining talent due to competition in larger centers. Investing in advertising for tourism was also expensive, for example, billboards along roads such as the TransCanada Highway 17 (as the town of Wawa does).

Infrastructure Problems and Regulations. Around Dubreuilville, any locally produced electricity must be distributed through the Algoma Power network. Investment costs are very high, but some firms might be interested in bearing most of the costs as long as they can secure long-term contracts. For example, in Quebec, aluminum firms signed successive 50-year contracts with Hydro-Quebec for DC electricity supply contracts for their plants located on the St. Lawrence River North Shore (Baie-Comeau for Alcoa, and Sept-Iles for Alouette).

Competition. There is strong competition from other regions of Canada, while Ontario seems to invest minimally in promoting foreign tourism. A majority of tourists coming to Northern Ontario tourist sites come from Northern Ontario and have several options.

Regulations. Restrictions on the use of snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles can threaten or hamper tourism, including some fishing and hunting activities in regions such as the Dubreuilville area.

Toronto-Based Power. Northern municipalities depend on decisions made in downtown Toronto by people who are not familiar with the North; As a result, Northerners constantly have to educate them again when staff changes occur within the provincial government based in Toronto's Queen's Park. Rural communities do not enjoy the economies of scale found in urban areas and are expected to occur by technocratic planners. Smaller communities have a fragile tax base to draw on to fund projects. In the long term, Northern Ontario towns are victims of a long-term trend of rural exodus, which further reduces local governments' income. Transportation costs for moving supplies, equipment, and people are also higher, given the extensive size of the province (over one million square kilometers, or 1.5 times the size of Texas).

Opportunities

Employment due to Business Expansion. The Alamos Gold expansion, plus a new gold mine, represents opportunities for Dubreuilville to grow its population. This also puts the Township in competition with other centers in Northern Ontario and elsewhere, who contemplate an expansion of their local mines and other development projects. All this results from the fact that demand for the non-ferrous metals and rare earth produced in the extended region grows from 4.5% to 7% per year. This trend is expected to continue at least until 2030, as it is driven in a large part by the shift towards a zero-greenhouse gas economy.

Awareness Program / Efforts Around the Availability of Housing in Dubreuilville. An idea would be for the CDEC to invite mine workers and others who are currently commuting from elsewhere to consider what type of housing is currently available in Dubreuilville, as well as what could become available and at what price. Several lots are ready for construction and already serviced. There are also other forms of housing available besides single-detached houses. Other forms of awareness campaigns have been mentioned, including inviting potential hires from other centers such as Greater Sudbury or Toronto, also including Francophone immigrant families; this also includes young couples who look to own a first house at an affordable price. It was noted that there is a need for concertation between those promoting housing in Dubreuilville and the HR services at Alamos and potential other employers, for mine employees to be made aware of the presence of various housing opportunities in the Dubreuilville Township. Energy Plan – Wawa has developed an energy plan: should Dubreuilville develop one as well?

Business Incentives. Another Northern town, Smooth Rock Falls, has developed a community incentives plan (CIP) geared towards attracting new business following the closure of the local paper mill. This is an opportunity to consider.

Inventory of Existing Buildings in the Former Sawmill Complex. It might be possible to renovate offices and create an incubator for new businesses. Economic diversification is also a possibility in several areas, notably by helping existing businesses to grow larger.

Traditional Tourism. In 2015, hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling attracted 37 percent of the clientele from the United States. Hotels, motels, restaurants, and general or corner stores are the first to gain from an economic upswing. Some new forms of tourism have been popular in Northern Ontario over the last ten years, as recent studies have shown. Some data are discussed below.

Cultural Tourism. Tours of natural and historical sites (including waterways, painted rocks sites, railway junctions, hydroelectric dams, waterfalls, and portages), access to fauna and flora, including within preserves and provincial parks. Bird watching is a popular destination for certain tourist segment populations, such as the Japanese (who also often come to Canada for the main purpose of visiting the Anne of Green Gables house on Prince Edward Island).

Nature Based -Tourism. In a report issued in 2015, it was estimated that close to 1 million tourists (Canadian in the majority) spent on average 4 nights and spent between \$ 60 and \$ 99 per day and per person during a stay in Northern Ontario, as much as in Manitoba. The table below illustrates these results.

TABLE 1
NATURE-BASED SPENDING IN NORTHERN ONTARIO’S SUB-REGIONS

Northeast	(13A)		North Central (13B)		Northwest (13C)	
Total Overnight Tourist Spending in Each Sub-Region	\$462,500,000	%	\$158,700,000	%	\$446,300,000	%
All Nature-Based Tourists	\$110,600,000	24%	\$42,300,000	27%	\$52,700,000	12%
Using Paid Roofed Lodging	\$53,998,000	12%	\$26,596,000	17%	\$17,221,000	4%
No Paid Roofed Lodging Campers*	\$56,587,000	12%	\$15,739,000	10%	\$35,495,000	8%
	\$18,147,000	4%	\$4,010,000	3%	\$12,511,000	3%

*Special Tabulations, TSRC 2012/2013 Pooled/ITS US/OVS 2012 prepared by Research Resolutions. *Campers are included in No Paid Roofed.*

Nature-Based Tourists are overnight tourists who engage in outdoor activities such as going to nature parks, boating, wildlife viewing or bird watching, camping, going to beaches, and/or hiking/backpacking but do not go hunting or fishing on their trip. Nature-Based Tourists are important contributors to total overnight tourist spending within each sub-region (see Table 1). They represent about 1-in-4 in dollars spent by all overnight tourists in each of Northeast and North Central. » Source: *Nature-based tourists in Northern Ontario - July 2015*. <https://tourismnorthernontario.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RTO13-Nature-Based-Final-Report-July-2015-.pdf>

Youth. Developing activities for Teens and Pre-Teens is also part of potential opportunities for Dubreuilville.

Internal Analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

People. The people of Dubreuilville represent the primary strength of the Township, as they display determination, an optimistic vision for the future, the desire to succeed, a community spirit of cooperation, as well as a history of resilience, and of capacity to innovate. All these characteristics have recently been demonstrated in a book published by historians of Dubreuilville (Dupuis & Blais, 2018).

Infrastructures. Roads are described as being in a satisfactory situation until 2025 to 2028 according to a report from 2013. The Mayor and Township staff are well aware of the situation regarding housing infrastructures and are on top of the planning process. Possible new dwelling sites have been selected as

well as potential new street locations. The 2017-2027 Official Plan includes details on the housing categories which would correspond to future needs.

Commercial Development. The Township is willing to attract new businesses and commercial developments adapted to local needs in relation to the existing social, health, education, and community recreational services. Currently, Dubreuilville has an elementary school, a high school (both Francophone), a health care center, an arena, and a senior citizens' residence.

Quality of Life. Nature trails on the shores of the Magpie River and access to nature represent the main aspects of the quality of life in Dubreuilville. It is also a safe community for all residents.

The Attractiveness of Rural Settings. According to Crow (2010), economically active people move into rural areas when high-quality jobs compatible with their experience and/or qualifications are available. Further reasons may include an appreciation of the local environment, the possibility of enjoying it as part of one's lifestyle, lower-cost housing, social and/or family connections, and a perceived sense of safety within a rural setting. Factors encouraging a return to rural areas relate to social ties, family obligations, high-quality employment opportunities (including the possibility of distance or e-working) and acting on a lifestyle change decision. Among seniors, factors encouraging a move into rural areas include an appreciation of the local environment, the presence of relatives and friends around the region, the availability of affordable housing, adequate health care services, and a perception of a strong sense of community. Crow also stressed the presence of a great deal of individual diversity in the motives given by people for living in rural areas. <https://www2.gov.scot/resource/doc/324274/0104365.pdf>

Weaknesses and Constraints

Telecommunication Infrastructure. This has been identified as the major problem in Dubreuilville at the moment. A solution is underway and should bring the Township to a viable level.

Population. There is a need to increase the population, as it has declined as compared to 2006; the average age increased, while some young people leave for postsecondary education and do not come back. There are ten empty houses in town.

Immigration. Dubreuilville and Northern Ontario are not immigration destinations yet. However, there has been an increase in the number of students of African origin in postsecondary institutions. This is due to three factors: 1) Due to new articulation agreements signed with the Boréal and Cité community colleges, Francophone programs in Business at Laurentian University attract graduates from the colleges who wish to obtain a university degree; 2) The Goodman School of Mines has signed an agreement with Limpopo University in the South African Republic, which brings Masters and Ph.D. Mining Engineering students at Laurentian University; and 3) Algoma and Hearst Universities, as well as Collège Boréal and Cambrian College also recruit students directly in Africa, while Laurentian University started doing the same after 2018.

Municipal Revenues. According to a 2013 report, Municipal revenues in Dubreuilville were not always corresponding to needs, particularly when infrastructures were concerned.

Housing. In 2015, it was diagnosed that a housing shortage existed for certain categories with regards to needs. This situation obliged some employees to commute every working day to other towns. Improvements have been made to the housing issue since 2015, it's ongoing. Mining firms have erected temporary bunkhouse accommodations and there were also a few rental apartments available in town.

Priority Issues. The Town Council will be obliged to make choices and determine priorities; however, several issues are pressing and require attention. These are listed under the recommendations in this plan.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS FROM THE NOVEMBER 1ST AND NOVEMBER 2ND TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Both meetings were very productive in describing the current situation and its components. On the morning of November 2nd, it became clear that, despite a complex situation, some actions were already underway, and some were under consideration. These could alleviate some key barriers to the development of the Dubreuilville Township. It is of primary importance for all of us, as citizens of Dubreuilville, to keep

in mind that we are in charge of our destinies. Our long-term success must outlast the economic cycle of any single private sector project. From that perspective, economic diversification is a tool to secure a future for our economy.

Along with recognizing we have no control and minimal influence over private corporations, it is important to recognize that we are in control of our destiny separate from them and the success of the Township of Dubreuilville must outlast the projected lifecycle of the mines. This can be achieved through diversification.

Current Actions

Aside from the previous considerations, it was also recognized, particularly during the November 2nd meeting, **that we are moving in the right direction and working toward addressing some key issues**, the following in particular was mentioned: 1) That notwithstanding all the generalizations that were made on the previous evening, the situation has changed significantly over the past ten years; despite the after effects that followed the closure of the sawmill in 2008, considerable positive changes have taken place since then; 2) That major issues populating the list of Dubreuilville Township's weaknesses are already being addressed, including: a) Actions towards getting broadband Internet installed through fiber optic technology; b) Attracting Francophone immigrants through the Northern Ontario Policy Institute; c) Identifying and designing original marketing campaigns geared towards increasing the awareness about Dubreuilville as an attractive destination to work and live for young Francophone families (such marketing could/would include showing the town to current Alamos mine employees and their spouses, identify younger miners who might be interested in housing with their fiancée – possibly organizing a Dubreuilville Days program during the summer). 3) A tour of Dubreuilville also demonstrates the presence of the significant school, health care, and recreation space, the buildings are well-maintained, several potential housing lots are already serviced, the town has invested in servicing some areas, and potential new streets have also been identified. All these actions will contribute to future success.

ACTION PLAN

There is agreement that the strategic issues at stake are well-known, not new, and will not go away, but are already being tackled, but not necessarily in a seemingly systematic and well-organized manner. The reality might well be that action is always somewhat chaotic, but here we suggest finding ways to forge ahead within the means and the level of determination we can muster and foster amongst ourselves as a community.

Several Issues Must Be Pursued Simultaneously

The success of the current actions, as well as further efforts, must be placed in perspective along with the daily activities that compose the management of a township. We must recognize that listing priorities linearly cannot work, as many of the necessary strategic action areas besides communications (Marketing of the town as a place to live, as a touristic destination, Website update, design of a new / renewed image and logo, labor-related issues, Francophone population, geographic, cultural, and attractiveness issues, wholesale/retail/industrial business attraction, energy issues, and housing) are intertwined and should not always be singled out or seen as separate from one another.

For example, on the housing issue, on the one side, Alamos Gold has bunkhouses and other forms of housing ready for the new employees it might be recruiting that would need accommodation on a short-term basis (i.e., for two weeks at a time). At the same time, there are in Dubreuilville some houses for sale, as well as vacant lots that could be constructed, even potential subdivisions that could be built by a developer. We also know that other firms will open new mines in other isolated areas of Northern Ontario within the next five years, which will create competition; however, due to all the efforts and actions accomplished over the last ten years, we know that Dubreuilville has several advantages. These will improve considerably once broadband Internet is available.

Smaller Communities Cannot Be Managed Like Large Cities

The daily management of the township by the municipal office has become increasingly burdensome for the small number of staff that can be afforded. There is a need for all municipalities in similar situations to come together and try (again) convincing the province of Ontario to find ways of designing a town management model more adapted to the situation specific to isolated and/or rural communities. As rural Ontario is generally considered the voting base of the new provincial government, there might currently be at Queen's Park some more sympathetic ears for this kind of conversation. It would be useful to put on paper a few ideas for thought on which categories of bureaucratic burden that could be lightened or performed more efficiently. Some might suggest hiring an external firm to conduct the exercise, we think, rather, that such a proposition might have more credibility if it came from the grassroots, i.e., from ourselves. Possibly, the Mayor's Group & ROMA (Rural Ontario Municipal Association) could spearhead this effort in conjunction with the Algoma District Municipal Association (ADMA) and Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA). Perhaps the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) would also join. For advocacy that may require a long-term effort, it would be important to find an organization (or two) willing to take the lead. Appendix 7 several number of recommendations that were proposed at the Alberta legislature regarding the needs of rural regions: they could inspire this effort.

Responsibility for Keeping the Strategic Action Plan Alive, Updated, and Carried Forward

Who should be responsible for keeping the Strategic Action Plan alive, updated, and carried forward is one of the Action Plan decisions to be made. In our opinion, it should be the role of those concerned citizens and others who have expertise to contribute, under the leadership of our elected officials. Hopefully, the Dubreuilville Township would be able to secure a full-time permanent EDO position, which could play a major role in strategic action. For the moment, it is obvious that the current people responsible for strategic action are those involved in writing this document.

FINAL REPORT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN CONTENTS

The Action Plan section of this final report outlines in general terms how current and future actions in the various strategic areas might be conducted in conjunction or parallel ways. Most of these actions will be contingent upon external factors (community support, financing decisions, staff, and volunteers' interests and/or time allocations, actions by other parties including governments/civil servants/ministries/First Nations/other partners, employers – current and potential); as this report is being finalized, the federal government has announced the creation of a Ministry of Rural Economic Development.

We can identify some future progress paths as potential possibilities, including models found elsewhere during our benchmarking searches. Most of the Appendices at the end of the document describe the experience of other regions and communities confronted with similar situations. A list of recommendations details those activities that have been selected as warranting priority treatment. While attracting and retaining the youth was not explicitly on the list of the main priorities, it was felt that it is implicit that the issue must be addressed by permeating through most other strategic endeavors (similarly, seniors or families are not singled out either). It would not be sustainable in the long term for Dubreuilville to ignore the role of the youth within a strategic planning activity. This is why a detailed table and by relevant rubric has been presented below about *Community actions helping teens and young adults to stay and encouraging them to come back*.

SPECIFIC ISSUES FOR ACTION

Attracting Francophone Families

It is often more effective to identify newcomers at ports of entry such as Montreal or Toronto through partnerships with organizations that would promote smaller centers and communities. The following are important suggestions in that context.

- Provide candidates with a realistic vision of their long-term potential career opportunities (ten years hence and beyond).
- Offer information about the community as well as the broader environment – schools, housing, commercial environment, and demography, so that candidates can picture their future professional and family life.
- Keep in mind that economically active people move into rural areas when high-quality jobs compatible with their experience and/or qualifications are available. Other reasons may include one's lifestyle, lower-cost housing, social and/or family connections, and a perceived sense of safety. Factors favoring a return to rural areas relate to social ties, family obligations, high-quality employment opportunities (including the possibility of distance or e-working), and lifestyle change decisions. For senior workers, additional factors include previous experiences, having relatives and friends in the region, affordable housing, adequate health care services, and a strong sense of community.

Practical Issues in Attracting Immigrants

Create a welcoming Facebook page and Web site for new potential immigrants, possibly in languages used in the countries we desire to recruit from. Some cities focus on basic information such as how to obtain a driver's license or about winter tires, while others such as North Bay also lend money (up to \$ 5,000) to help people settle in.

Another aspect is to ensure that immigrants feel comfortable enough to stay after they have settled. In a smaller center, they won't find earlier settlers from their country to help them, and it becomes important for them to have access to a network of local welcoming volunteers to help these families adapt to Dubreuilville. In Timmins, the Town increased the number of diversity trainers and developed events aiming at matching newcomers with local long-time residents, such as the « Welcome to Timmins Night». This particular activity brings in Non-Government Organizations, sports teams, town officials, and the local MP and MPP for a social event. A similar strategy could be applied in Dubreuilville.

Attracting Young Miners and Spouses

Many people might want to escape from urban life to raise their families (see Appendix 9. *Case Study: City Dwellers Move to A Remote Area*). While people will still enjoy having access to a larger city in the wider region, they prefer a slower pace to live and raise children. Other reasons, besides those evoked above, include shorter commuting to work, the opportunity to have leisure time in nature, the absence of close neighbors, the possibility to have pets and other animals (horses, cattle), having a garden, less pollution, and enjoy the conviviality of rural life.

Economic Activities

Smooth Rock Falls can be used as a model that can be adapted. Welcoming policies for new business, but also emphasizing the intrinsic assets of the Dubreuilville area, rather than providing the cash. These assets include the dynamism and enthusiasm of the people, as well as the infrastructures available to families and businesses (for example serviced lots). Allow the youth to leave for education while facilitating their later return once they have opened their minds and obtained a solid education and professional training. Helping investors with a project could be another way of attracting business by helping with prospecting visits and logistics. Entrepreneurship from already established residents can also represent significant new business opportunities, without having to bring in a business from somewhere else.

Tourism

Dubreuilville has enormous natural potential and can use it to attract tourists via its website. Tourism can become a major driver in the economic development of dynamic and vibrant rural communities. New technologies such as broadband allow tour operators large and small to share into marketing platforms. Such technologies have a wide potential to improve the local tourism industry's global visibility, including accommodation, entertainment, restoration and outdoor activities, as well as special events such as festivals,

derbies, and other recreational activities. The development of a Cultural Festival, which would include music, as well as games, dances, and other activities, possibly a pow-wow on a nearby First nation, could be a way of creating summer action to showcase Dubreuilville. Such an activity would also put Dubreuilville on the circuit map for vacationers and travelers looking for original, typically Canadian, cultural events.

Regional tourist associations also play an important role in implementing provincial strategies leading to an expansion of tourism. They can multiply the impact of dollars spent by smaller communities that cannot afford sufficient budgets of their own to obtain the level of reach necessary to produce substantial growth. Increased participation in regional tourism associations such as the Algoma Kinniwabi Travel Association and Aventure Nord will assist the growth and expansion of the Dubreuilville tourism sector.

Promoting a Culinary Alliance

This would involve investing in a culinary festival, as visitors and tourists are generally interested in experimenting with local food products, culture, and festivities. Creating an alliance between various communities would make such a project a success by inviting guests from other regions, chefs, sommeliers, as well as possibly artists. There would be a place for innovation and cooperation toward unique solutions and possibly a culinary brand. The integration of GPS coordinates in promotional material could also be envisaged.

Leisure Propositions

Youth and Senior integration through common activities, such as storytelling / recording, similar to Community Memory projects undertaken by Centre Franco-Ontarien de Folklore research in West Nipissing and across Northern Ontario, with *Prise de Parole* (publisher from Sudbury), previously initiated by academic author Germain Lemieux (the award-winning Series *Les vieux m'ont conté*). Older residents were interviewed for several decades by high school and university students as part of these projects, which resulted in a large amount of published material about our common past.

Consider facilitating the participation of teenagers in decisions through a Youth Council engaged with the Township's decision-making process. Develop active events such as gardening, planting, dance, music, sports (curling), crafts, language club, and unique events organized throughout the year (link with business, tourism, website, self-discovery or motivational conferences, and other issues of interest to the youth). Events could revolve around specific days as well, such as Halloween, Valentine's Day, and regular holidays.

Agriculture

In coordination with the OMAFRA, programs have been put into place to encourage agriculture in Northern Ontario. A project that is pertinent to Dubreuilville is the Northern Livestock Pilot Action Plan. Northern Ontario's agriculture, aquaculture, and food processing sector provides over 4,000 jobs. Primary agriculture and aquaculture alone generate \$230 million in revenue. A pilot project is currently underway in the Great Clay Belt between Cochrane and Hearst. This area is well suited for *low-density, forage, and pasture-based livestock production* <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/policy/nlpap.htm#study>. The government project seeks the disposition of Crown Land for Agriculture. *Beef Farmers of Ontario has developed a website for promoting the opportunities for beef production and cow herd expansion in Northern Ontario.*

As global warming and genetic research continue, new crops can be grown and harvested successfully in Northern Ontario, including some grains. Soybean production has increased significantly from 2011 to 2016 offering growth opportunities for small communities such as Dubreuilville. It is also notable that most of the farms surveyed during a study in West Nipissing in 1997 (Cachon and Cotton, 1997) had owners with full-time jobs, who farmed for both pleasure and a minimal additional income (generally speaking, most farms would break even and export grain crops to the United States through a local farmers' owned cooperative). Farming as a side activity also corresponds to the entrepreneurial characteristic that is found among Millennials born between 1981 and 1996.

Youth Retention – General Issues

For a youth retention plan to be successful, it needs to be led by competent individuals. One of the major challenges faced by small communities is the lack of a leadership pool. This is visible in most communities where major industries depart or management is moved to larger cities, reducing the town population and taking with it the vast majority of highly educated personnel (Engineers, physicians, teachers, and others). This may lead to increased pressure on remaining leaders – typically referred to as “the same ten people” (*Rural Alberta – Land of Opportunity* – Appendix 8 below) Recommendations to help alleviate this issue involve:

- Engaging community and training new volunteers from various age groups, including elders;
- Creating a welcoming community;
- Including youth and young adults in leadership roles and training others;
- Training leadership trainers, also through national organizations such as Junior Achievement (JA) or Direction Jeunesse (DJ);
- Creating community spaces through the collaboration of local organizations.

There are always opportunities for individuals to volunteer, especially in small communities where resources are limited. People who are not connected to volunteer networks may want to volunteer but may not know how to access the opportunities or requirements. The municipality can help by making the community aware of the need for volunteers through various communications, official and other, as well as educating organizations on how to reach out to the community, and hosting community involvement days to establish relationships between organizations.

Youth Advisory Committee

In connection with the need for volunteers, rural communities are facing an exodus of young adults, as is the case in Dubreuilville. Some of this exodus is desired as young adults leave the community to obtain higher education. The greatest factor in determining whether a young adult will return to a rural community is their attachment to the community. To develop this link, a nurturing environment must be created where students see the potential of returning to their home community.

Studies have shown that a youth advisory committee that is involved in community planning and municipal affairs has great potential to create a municipality where students want to return. It is important not only to create the committee but also to implement the ideas proposed by the group and allow them to provide input on council decisions. The goal after all is to create a community they want to live in and where they can see themselves staying.

Create Spaces for the Youth

As the population grows, expansion of this program to involve other age groups, as well as other initiatives will be important, for example, bringing more educational opportunities to the community. Collaboration across institutions is crucial in providing an increased number of programs within a community, to provide the best opportunity to maximize the resources available and increase overall attractiveness. By joining school and community centers together and pooling resources, it is possible to create multipurpose spaces that are used year-round to create a center of culture and learning within the town.

Examples of where this has been put into place in Northern Ontario include, Le Pavois culturel in Longlac and École Jeunesse-Nord in Blind River, as well as many other communities across Canada. Following the creation of these community schools, student enrollment has increased and has increased the school and community’s availability to provide services to the community.

The greatest challenge faced by these centers is the coordination between the various organizations involved: local and other levels of government, school boards, and other organizations. Building these centers requires years of planning and negotiation to achieve success, but those efforts can provide the community with what could not be achieved individually.

TABLE 2
COMMUNITY ACTIONS HELP TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS TO STAY AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO COME BACK

Rubrics	Encouraging the youth to come back	Helping the youth to stay
Housing	Affordable housing rental or purchase, with a variety of opportunities in terms of leases and purchasing terms. Variety of housing styles and opportunities, as well as sensitization of the real estate sector to the needs of Millennials and younger generations.	Affordable rentals, crisis lodging for teens, and real estate agents' sensitivity to the needs of youth workers.
Leisure	Range of leisure options; Open minded leisure organizations welcoming new members into activities and leadership; inclusive artistic and cultural activities.	Help with transportation if necessary; more leisure options without alcohol involved; curling, skating infrastructures, inclusive artistic and cultural activities.
Health Care Access	Adequate staffing; Families support services; Adequate day care facilities.	Health care services geared towards the youth; mental health services; Help with transportation if necessary;
Transportation	Good public transportation with regional / metro links; Affordable alternate options including walkways, bicycle lanes... Equitable fuel prices with larger centers.	Good public transportation (if necessary) with regional / metro links; Affordable alternate options; options available to the youth; increase options allowing for connections with larger centers.
Employment	Regional career available; Appropriate work/life balance; pay equity with larger centers; underscore local advantages: shorter commute, less traffic...	Acceptable salary/remuneration package; adequate lodging allocation outside the home for apprentices.
Education	Flexible postsecondary options; adult education options.	Flexible postsecondary options; a range of adult education options; alternatives to high school available.
Diversity	Local leadership embraces diversity; media images of the diversity within the community (ex. The Nations Bridge in Sudbury); celebrates diversity in the community; encourage the development of diversity-supporting organizations.	Adequate health services; distance access to specialized services located in regional and metropolitan centers; outreach services.
Professional and Community Life	Positive perceptions of life and work in the Dubreuilville area; encouragement of support structures such as a Dubreuilville Young Professionals' Network and a Newcomers group; innovative volunteering opportunities.	Community leadership and decision-making opportunities available to the youth; innovative services organizations/volunteering encouraging youth participation; mentorship opportunities for young

Rubrics	Encouraging the youth to come back	Helping the youth to stay
		entrepreneurs and community members.
Community Pride	Positive perceptions of the rural way of life; the community nurtures and celebrates a sense of belonging.	The community nurtures and celebrates a sense of belonging; community leadership and decision-making opportunities are available to the youth within the community.
Technology and Communications	Improved Internet connections allow people to have an online business which helps them supplement their income; Broadband is also used for face-to-face meetings, as well as entertainment and recreation.	Improve high-speed Internet to allow youth to take Internet courses from high school and postsecondary institutions. Broadband is also used for face-to-face meetings, as well as entertainment and recreation.
Developing a more attractive community	Millennials are adventurous, creative, and like socializing; cafés and spaces where they can meet and play, have a beverage, and listen to music are important;	There are higher proportions of self-employed and entrepreneurs among Millennials;
Support for local entrepreneurs	Millennials will be more likely to come back if there is an entrepreneurial culture well alive and vibrant in the community; they will also value social networking and forums where they can meet others at the same life stage.	Young entrepreneurs will not stay if they are not supported and cannot make ends meet; business and entrepreneurship classes in high school could foster a lot of interest among students as well as their parents; Indigenous business is also on the rise across Canada, with a specialized curriculum in existence since 2011; Business plan competitions have been very popular since the turn of the century.
Involve younger generations in planning and connect with them via the media they use	Connect with young adults through social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others, not through TV or newspapers; Recommendations by others are a key success factor; Dubreuilville will get referrals from those who like living there after they come back.	Actively consult with teens and young adults about community development plans that would affect them directly; Make sure their opinions count; Ensure they know you'd like them to stay or come back after their studies;

RECOMMENDATIONS

As these recommendations are all important, there was no reason for numbering them, but they are identified by letters to facilitate their referencing.

- A. Pursue the ongoing opportunity of working with the Director for Employment and Immigration within the Société Économique de l'Ontario** (Directeur Immigration & Employabilité - Société Économique de l'Ontario) to attract Francophone workers from

countries from the Francophonie into currently available positions. (*There are 54 countries or regions that are full members, 4 are associated members, and 26 have an observer status; these 84 jurisdictions self-define as «members» of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, or OIF*) – Discuss the possibility of a presentation by someone from the SEO around the same time as the Strategic Plan 2019-2024 will be presented.

- B. Develop an immigration strategy, focused on French-speaking countries.** This would include developing successful newcomer attraction and retention services and related activities that would ensure that the strategy remains successful in the long term. Partnering with relevant agencies is essential.
- C. Develop a 4-Season Tourism Strategy** focusing on the Mooseback Trail System. Integrate technology and a social media-linked component to help attract millennial tourists. Consider photo-friendly upgrades to the town. i.e., façade improvements, lighting, street art that speaks to the local history, etc. – “Attracting Millennial Tourists with a Photo-Friendly Town in the Age of Instagram”. Participate in the campaigns of the Algoma Kinniwabi Travel Association and Aventure Nord (Adventure North).

The West Nipissing municipality is located in an area where tourism dates back 100 years, notably for hunting and fishing purposes in the French River and lake Nipissing regions, including the Anishnabe Nipissing No 10 Reserve. A field study conducted in West Nipissing showed that tourist spending represented over 35% of the local economy (Cachon & Lagrandeur, 2016) and was offsetting spending leakage from the region. In Northern Ontario, the City of **Greater Sudbury** has implemented a new tourism tax generating funding for promotional purposes. When a coal mine closed in West Virginia, they converted the site into bike trails for off-road vehicles. The state gave them \$1.5 million for the conversion. Trail licenses bring in \$2 million a year. Dubreuilville could partner with White River and Wawa to develop and expand the existing trail systems jointly. You have to invest money to make money. (Appendix 2)
- D. Develop a Communications/ Marketing Strategy.** Consider several stages depending on the availability of provincial funding dollars. 1) Self-Funding a website with content produced in-house, including the important land/real estate inventory/database. 2) Obtain funding to create a community-specific long-term marketing/communications strategy. 3) Participate in any region-wide marketing/communications strategies.
- E. Ensure that we (Representatives of the Township of Dubreuilville et al) are active participants on regional/provincial/federal boards, committees, and panels.** If we are not present and active to advocate on issues that are important to us, we cannot trust other municipalities/groups to represent and address our concerns. Action Steps to Change: Include routine attendance to key events such as ROMA, FONOM, EDAC/EDCO, PDAC, etc. Perhaps decide during the budgetary process/business planning process and determine which events we want to attend and why. Plan to send a delegation with a key message.
- F. Conducting an organizational and operational review is critical.** The process will identify best practices, areas of improvement, and potential areas where we can become more efficient. See Windsor benchmark (Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada, 2021).
- G. Completion of a Community Improvement Plan** by the Township of Dubreuilville. This would allow the Township to offer incentives in any recruitment and attraction programs that they offer. This could also include incentives being offered to those wishing to build homes. Specifically, the Township may want to consider implementing a Rental House Community Improvement Plan similar to Sault Ste. Marie (SSM). Developing a partnership/mentoring arrangement with the City of SSM may assist the Township of Dubreuilville attract developers interested in investing or cost-sharing a project.
- H. Advocate and lobby for Canada Post to implement a plan to incorporate financial services at postal offices** in rural and isolated communities.

- I. Advocate and lobby Queen’s Park to creating sustainable rural communities** (recommendations in line with those benchmarked in the *Alberta MLA Rural Opportunities Report*). The first step to **creating sustainable rural communities** is to ensure that the foundation of those communities - the four pillars of health care, education, economic growth, and community infrastructure - is strong. That foundation must then be linked to other elements of sustainability – the quality of life, support for youth, opportunities for Aboriginal populations, and preservation of the environment. Finally, these measures need to be protected and nurtured, by ensuring a strong voice for rural people and their communities in government decision-making.
- J. Develop a strategy for the Youth**, along with the recommended Action Plan Recommendations in this report. Details have been provided above, including in Table 2.
- K. The development of a Cultural Festival**, or a series of Cultural Events of various types. They could include music, as well as games, dances, and other activities, possibly a pow-wow on a nearby First nation, which could be a way of creating summer action to showcase Dubreuilville. The railway link that still exists between Sudbury and Dubreuilville could also be the occasion of an experiment of Music on Rail, where people could ride one way to attend a weekend of music in Dubreuilville, then ride the other way to attend (for example) theatre or music events or shows in Sudbury the following week. Theme festivals could also be organized around current artists such as Shania Twain, Kristine St-Pierre, G.R. Gritt, Crystal Shawanda, Larry Berrio, Edouard Landry, or Robert Paquette, or in memory of passed celebrities of the North like Stompin’ Tom Connors or Jos Méloche.

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APPENDIX 1: FACTS AND DATA FROM PAST REPORTS

Role of CEDC

As expressed by the *Official Plan 2015-2027* (p. 40): « The Community Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) (as an arm's length organization to municipal Council) will serve as the focal point for the implementation of the diversification strategy. The CEDC will also provide ongoing support for setting up cooperatives and non-profits as well as entrepreneurial based businesses and business plan development. The CEDC will serve as a resource group for funding, labor force and community services information. The CEDC will track changes in economic activities with the objective of sustaining or retaining existing businesses and facilitating new business development. The CEDC will establish a partnership with the mining industry to assist in the implementation of plans to accommodate the housing and other impacts created by the reopening of mines in the vicinity of the community. »

Community Profile 2014

Pages 35 to 42 of the *2014 Dubreuilville Community Profile* contain interesting descriptions of potential renewable energy sources contrasted between 2000 and 2050.

The Dubreuilville 2015 Commercial, Industrial, and Residential Study (CIRS)

The report summarized the history of the town as follows:

- Dubreuilville is a Township in the Canadian Province of Ontario, located in the Algoma District. Established as a company town in 1961 by the Dubreuil Brothers Lumber Company, Dubreuilville was incorporated as a municipality in 1977. The community was founded based on the ambitions of four young brothers. In 1947, the Dubreuil brothers moved from Quebec to Ontario in search of opportunities in the sawmill industry. In 1952, while working as lumber harvesting contractors in Northern Ontario, the brothers purchased lot concessions from the Algoma Central Railway. On this new land, they constructed a sawmill and roughly 30 houses, establishing the community of Magpie. Ten years later, following a devastating fire at the mill, the brothers obtained cutting rights 23 kilometers northeast of Magpie. In 1961 approximately 200 people were moved from Magpie to the newly established Municipality of Dubreuilville. The forestry sector experienced growth during the post-1960 period; as a result, Dubreuilville experienced an in migration of population during the three decades that followed. Total population increased to about 990 in 1996.

The CIRS's main conclusions pinpointed both strengths and weaknesses within the community, as well as external opportunities and threats: major weaknesses identified were the potential shortage of housing and the need for improved infrastructures.

Strengths

Richmont Mines employed 220 people in 2015. There was no unemployment in Dubreuilville in 2015. Tourism contributes to the local economy (no data provided). Municipal water and sewage services were deemed as adequate for a population of 2,000 until 2028-2029 (p. 27). Business travel also brings in spending from the outside (no data provided). Local roads are reported as adequate, and it is mentioned that a by-pass would eventually prevent trucks from driving within a residential area. Housing costs are reported as reasonable, i.e., lower than in most large centers, therefore affordable for all categories of personnel (data from the National Household Survey 2011 seemed in disagreement with this finding but there was no evidence provided as per the accuracy of these data).

Weaknesses

Telecommunications infrastructures are described as being below necessary standards in terms of Internet and Wi-Fi (p. 27), while long term waste disposal issues were identified as an issue that would be addressed by sharing a regional waste disposal system with White River and Michipicoten. The bankruptcy of the Buchanan group is mentioned as having hindered the growth of the community, on top of the Dubreuil mill closure in 2008. Full employment means that it is difficult to hire, particularly for positions in the skilled trades. Temporary limited-term positions would create needs for short-term housing. New industrial developments might create a need for 40 to 85 new dwellings destined to families (p. 22). The average age of mining personnel was 51 years in 2015, which could result in transition issues if or when people start retiring.

Opportunities

There have been strong mining and exploration activities in the region, particularly with Prodigy Gold. Linking Highway 519 to Highway 101 would result in flow-through traffic of business and commercial drivers, as well as tourists attracted to experiencing the drive through the Chapleau-Dubreuilville forested area, particularly rich with wildlife.

Threats

Restrictions on snowmobile and RV activities hinder tourism. Competing operations in Wawa, Sault-Ste-Marie and other regions in Northern Ontario and Quebec are in competition for hiring specialized personnel. This is corroborated by reports from Workforce Training Boards, in particular Sudbury and Manitoulin Workforce Planning. This is combined with the enduring poor reputation of the mining industry among young generations.

The 2013 Report

Dubreuilville Community, Economic, & Mining Growth Action Plan contained a lot of information still relevant today, in particular regarding the SWOT analysis. Other reports provide detailed information on specific aspects of municipal management, which are beyond the scope of this strategic plan. They also reveal which were the main orientations already obtaining a consensus among the population as well as the Township, particularly the vision statement which also appears in the *2017-2017 Official Plan*.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES DESCRIBED IN THE OFFICIAL PLAN 2015-2027

Agriculture

From the *Official Plan* (p. 33): There are no lands utilized or identified as prime agricultural lands in the Natural Resources Area. The intent of this Plan is to permit agricultural uses provided they do not include a residential component. Agriculture-related uses may be permitted in a designated Industrial Area.

Tourism and 4-Season Activities/Destination

The *Official Plan* (p. 41) builds on the Township's Strategic Plan by reinforcing a number of initiatives including: promoting event-destination tourism such as the Strongman competition and promoting the community as a 4- season destination; building motorized recreational activity tourism (snowmobiling and off-road vehicles); exploring opportunities for Ecotourism by building on the natural beauty of the region.

Mining

Mineral resources-related uses such as exploration, mine development, mining and milling mineral resources, buildings, and ancillary activities will be encouraged as means to strengthen the economic base of Dubreuilville. (*Official Plan* p. 34).

The municipality acknowledges that based on the Metallic Mineral Potential Estimation Tool (MMPET) Index of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines; the entire geographic area of the municipality is considered to have high mineral potential. The intent of the Plan is to recognize the value of metallic mineral resources for their economic benefit to the community while working with the Crown to ensure that mineral resource related activities within the Natural Resources Area in general, are undertaken to ensure land use compatibility with other land uses. The expectation of the municipality is that provincial approvals will be coordinated with local land use planning.

The municipality also recognizes mining operations outside of the corporate boundaries and the importance of a coordinated approach to planning for the impacts on housing demand, industrial and commercial and other services in Dubreuilville. It shall be a policy that past producing mining operations, mine hazards and active mining operations shall be subject to the *Mining Act* with respect to rehabilitation and/or closure. Rehabilitation to accommodate subsequent land uses will be required after extraction and related activities have ceased. (*Official Plan*, p. 35-36)

Natural Heritage Features and Areas

(*Official Plan* p. 35-36) No significant areas have been identified by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry except for the presence of bald eagle, a species of special concern (i.e. lives in the wild in Ontario, is not endangered or threatened, but may become threatened or endangered due to a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats). There are no locations of confirmed habitat of endangered or threatened species within the Township of Dubreuilville. At this time, the only endangered or threatened species identified within the Township of Dubreuilville is that of Eastern Meadowlark and Barn Swallow under the *Endangered Species Act*. The Magpie is a cold-water river (contains walleye, northern pike, white sucker and brook trout). No nesting sites have been identified for the bald eagle.

There are no known provincially significant wetlands identified within the municipality at this time; the Plan would protect significant wetlands if identified and confirmed at a later date through a wetland evaluation which determines that the wetland is significant.

Prodigy Mine (identified in *Official Plan 2017-2027*, p. 1) Located outside the Township boundaries.
Strike Mine (identified in *Official Plan 2017-2027*, p. 1) Located outside the Township boundaries.

On lands designated as Mineral Aggregate Resource Area on the Land Use Plan, Schedule “B” the scope of permitted uses shall include a *mineral aggregate operation, asphalt and concrete plants*, mineral aggregate processing facilities and administration buildings or structures, wayside pits or quarries, forestry use, conservation use, peat extraction and associated accessory uses. (*Official Plan* p. 28).

Accessory buildings and structures to any of the foregoing uses shall be permitted. No known mineral aggregate resources are shown on lands alienated from the Crown. However, two authorized aggregate extraction sites are located between the Magpie River and Sausage Lake.

Peat extraction is encouraged as an economic activity (From the *Official Plan*, p. 30). Peat extraction activities, however, shall not lead to or cause negative impacts to the conservation or protection of any adjacent wetlands. Council may regulate peat extraction activities within the authority granted by the *Planning Act*, the *Drainage Act*, or the *Municipal Act* (e.g., zoning, site plan control, haul routes, removal of topsoil, dust control, drainage, site alteration, phasing, and rehabilitation). Lands used for peat extraction shall be satisfactorily rehabilitated for any proposed sequential resource use or other land use.

Current Mining Operations

Island Gold Mine, Alamos Gold Inc. (Source of description below: Alamos Gold public access web site) On September 5, 2018, Alamos Gold issued a press release reporting an increase of its reserves, as well as an increase in mineral reserve grades to 10.69 grams of gold per metric ton (a 5% improvement over previous gradings), which makes it one of the highest-grade gold mines in Canada. The Island Gold mine was operated commercially by Richmond Mines from October 1, 2007, until it was sold to Alamos Gold in 2017.

The Island Gold Mine is located 83 kilometers northeast of Wawa, Ontario. The mine comprises 217 patented, leased and staked claims covering 7,926 hectares. It is accessible via a four-season road from Highway 519, just west of the town of Dubreuilville. The Island Gold mine is a high-grade, low-cost underground mining operation located in Northern Ontario, Canada. Since it began production in October 2007, the mine has produced over 500,000 ounces of gold.

The operation is undergoing a phase I expansion of underground mining and milling rates to 1,100 tonnes (metric) per day (“tpd”) as outlined in the May 2017 Expansion Case Preliminary Economic Assessment (“PEA”). The expansion is expected to be completed in the second half of 2018 for minimal incremental capital of approximately \$23 million. This is expected to drive strong free cash flow growth reflecting an increase in average annual production rates to approximately 125,000 ounces of gold and decrease mine-site AISC (*All-In Sustaining Costs, note that this metric is under debate, see presentation by Malensek to Denvergold, Vancouver, 2016*) to approximately \$550 per ounce starting in 2019.

The main objective of the PEA was to identify the most cost and capital effective approach to mining mineral resources within the main area of focus and down to a maximum depth of 1,000 meters, using existing mine infrastructure. As such, there remains additional opportunities for mine life extension and further expansions incorporating the more than 750,000 ounces of inferred mineral resources (as of December 31, 2016) not included within the PEA and the significant exploration potential with the deposit open laterally and at depth. »

At the Island Gold mine, the Company is required to pay a 3% net smelter royalty on production from the Lochalsh claims, a 2% net smelter return royalty in addition to a 15% net profit interest royalty per ounce produced from the Goudreau claims, as well, a 4.38% net smelter return royalty and a 10.38% net profit interest royalty per ounce produced from Goudreau Lake property. For the three and six months ended June 30, 2018, the Company recorded a royalty expense of \$1.6 million and \$3.2 million, respectively related to

production at Island Gold (three and six months ended June 30, 2017 - \$nil). » (Alamos Gold – Second Quarter Report – June 30, 2018, Notes to Condensed Interim Consolidated Financial Statements, p. 19)

Comments About Alamos Gold

Financially, the firm maintains substantial cash to fund its expansion activities and is also well capitalized; one of the major shareholders (Van Eck Associates Corporation) increased its equity contribution from 9.49% to 10.35% on Sept. 7, 2018. Alamos Gold may also access up to US\$ 400 million in revolving credit in order to fund its mines' expansions. Finally, Island Gold is one of the lowest cost gold mines in the Canadian industry, which positions it well against recessions, as compared to its competitors.

Energy sources cited in the *Official Plan 2015-2027* (p. 66): Active and passive solar energy; Biomass, geothermal, wind as well as small hydroelectric plants have been identified as potential renewable energy sources.

Wireless High-Speed Internet

Ontera has been approached and provided some information (Appendix 4). Apparently, there might already be an existing tower near Dubreuilville that could be updated. High speed services might require the construction of a more important structure.

APPENDIX 2: STRATEGIC IDEAS DERIVED FROM *MUNICIPAL WORLD* MAGAZINE (Melanie Pilon)

Coincidentally, many of the stories that were in the last four issues of the *Municipal World* magazine were discussed at the Strategic Planning Sessions. I feel that this is an indication that we are on the right track. Please see below a collection of recommendations that I found while reviewing MW magazine. I have ranked them in order of importance based on the conversations we have had.

1. **Develop an immigration strategy, focused on French speaking countries.** This would include developing successful newcomer attraction and retention services that would ensure that the strategy remains successful. - “Building Welcoming Communities” – September 2018 – *Municipal World*
2. **Develop a Communications/ Marketing Strategy**
 - Consider doing in stages depending on availability of provincial funding dollars.
 1. Self-Funding a website w. content produced in-house, including the important land/real estate inventory/database.
 2. Acquiring funding to create a long-term marketing/communications strategy community specific.
 3. Participating in any region wide marketing/communications strategies. – “A recipe for Strategy, Storytelling & Success in Saugeen Shores”, October 2018, *Municipal World*.
 4. https://www.saugeenshores.ca/en/resources/SaugeenShores_GuideJUNE2017.pdf
 5. <https://www.saugeenshores.ca/en/resources/CCS-Summary-2017.pdf>
3. **Develop a 4-Season Tourism Strategy** focusing on the Mooseback Trail System. Integrate technology and a social media linked component to help attract millennial tourists. Consider photo friendly upgrades to the town. i.e., façade improvements, lighting, street art that speaks to the local history etc. – “Attracting Millennial Tourists with a Photo-Friendly Town in the Age of Instagram” – August 2018 – *Municipal World*.
4. **Ensure that we (Representatives of the Township of Dubreuilville et al) are active participants on regional/provincial/federal boards, committees, panels.** If we are not present and active to advocate on issues that are important to us, we cannot trust other municipalities/groups to represent and address our concerns. Action Steps to Change:

Incorporate attending key events such as ROMA, FONOM, EDAC, PDAC etc. Perhaps decide during the budgetary process/business planning process and determine which events we want to attend and why. Plan to send a delegation with a key message. – “Breaking Through the Municipal Glass Ceiling”, October 2018, *Municipal World*.

5. **Conducting an organizational and operational review is critical.** The process will identify best practices as well as identify areas of improvement and potential areas where we can become more efficient. https://grandfallswindsor.com/images/RFP_-_Organizational_and_Operational_Review.pdf “A Strategic Approach to Small-Town Service Delivery” – September 2018 – *Municipal World*
6. **Completion of a Community Improvement Plan** by the Township of Dubreuilville. This would allow the Township to offer incentives in any recruitment and attraction programs that they offer. This could also include incentives being offered to those wishing to build homes. Specifically, the Township may want to consider implementing a Rental House Community Improvement Plan similar to Sault Ste. Marie (SSM). Developing a partnership/mentoring arrangement with the City of SSM may assist the Township of Dubreuilville attract developers interested in investing or cost-sharing a project. – “Incentivizing New Rental Construction” - October 2018, *Municipal World*.
7. **Advocate and lobby for Canada Post to implement a plan to incorporate financial services at postal offices** in rural and isolated communities. – “The Demise of Rural Banking” – September & October 2018, *Municipal World*.

APPENDIX 3: IDEAS FOR POSITIVE ACTIONS TO WELCOME AND RETAIN FAMILIES

Welcome Baskets

As part of its marketing campaign, Dubreuilville could implement a “welcome wagon” style service. A basket or box would be offered to newcomers or potential residents. This package should include local products, such as homemade bread from LOL, a welcome card from the municipality and coupons and discounts for stores in the community. In addition, newcomers would find in this basket a document describing the services and programs offered in Dubreuilville. This document should be a living document that evolves with the community and is therefore easy to update. In order to be relevant, it should contain not only the services, but also the sources of information necessary for individuals to obtain up-to-date information, in the form of a contact person or a website.

This document should include:

- Community services;
- Available rental space, e.g., renting a room for a family reunion; This is an interesting marketing factor for family reunions, children’s parties and other gatherings.
- Groups and clubs;
- Arena.

This same basket could be used in other recruitment programs to emphasize the benefits of Dubreuilville and entice people to come back to Dubreuilville, either to visit or to reside.

Co-op Internships

In order to attract young people and accomplish projects on a reduced budget, the municipality could create an internship program. Post-secondary students would be invited to come and do their co-op internship in the community. These individuals could possibly move to Dubreuilville or act as ambassadors for the community when they return to school in larger towns or cities. The municipality could also encourage local schools to take on education students to undergo their internships. Interns could be provided with a home or host family to facilitate their integration. Also, a sponsorship program could be set up to help these individuals take full advantage of their stay in Dubreuilville.

APPENDIX 4: WIRELESS HIGH SPEED INTERNET OPTIONS

NOTE: The information below was obtained from Ontera before the Laurentian Team was made aware that another solution was already under way. However, it was thought that what is described below might help in case other options might still be contemplated by some private entities or interested parties.

OPTIONS FOR DUBREUILVILLE: WIRELESS HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

Supplied by Ontera to Summer Ashamock-Butterfly (Sept. 14, 2018)

Several components are required to deliver wireless high-speed Internet.

1. Delivery method
2. Provider for a feed from the Internet
3. Customer Premise equipment
4. Billing mechanism

The assumption is made that a local consortium will be created to administer the service and bill customers. They will have to account for the costs of components 1 through 3 above to ensure cost recovery.

Delivery Method

There are several options to accomplish this. The most cost-effective method would be to construct a light duty tower (like a Trylon Super Titan) approximately 150 feet tall in town and use a data only LTE radio system.

Estimated costs would be approximately \$150,000.00 to \$175,000.00 for this portion. This would include the tower, the LTE data only radio base station and a DC power plant so that the equipment would function even if the commercial hydro were out.

Companies like Crossover Networks could provide accurate pricing on the LTE radio equipment. The second option would be to approach the cellular companies (TbayTel, Bell Mobility) to install a full blown 4G cell tower in the town. These costs would be much higher, in the \$1 Million \$1.5 Million range for the heavy-duty tower and cell base station.

Feed From the Internet

An Internet feed is required to provide the bandwidth to be distributed by the tower. If the data only option from above is selected, it would be recommended starting out with a 100 Mbps symmetrical Internet service to feed the tower.

Suggested suppliers would be Bell Canada or Shaw. It is anticipated that this option would cost approximately \$1,600.00 to \$2,000.00 per month.

Alternatively, K-Net (A First Nations organization) could provide the bandwidth by satellite.

If the full-blown cell site is chosen a larger feed to the Internet is required. It is estimated that the Dubreuilville location would require 400 Kbps to 600 Kbps for reliable voice and Internet service. It is anticipated that this would come at a cost of approximately \$5,000.00 to \$8,000.00 per month.

Customer Premise Equipment

If the data only option is selected the anticipated cost for equipment would be \$500.00 installed, per customer location. (Crossover networks could provide more refined pricing)

If the cellular option is chosen, then the equipment and data plans would have to be purchased from the cellular provider by each individual customer.

Billing

A group would need to be formed if the data only option was selected to ensure that revenues collected would cover the monthly charges to provide the service, and to recover the capital costs of the tower over time.

APPENDIX 5: ATTRACTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF IMMIGRANTS

McGrath, J.M. 2016. *How can rural communities attract the next generation of immigrants?* TV Ontario, August 16, 2016. <https://tvo.org/article/current-affairs/how-can-rural-communities-attract-the-next-generation-of-immigrants>

WINDSOR — Welcome to Canada. This is how to dress for -40° C (or F) weather. Yes, it gets that cold here. It's not the only lesson Maggie Matear teaches new Canadians looking to settle in Timmins, but it's one of the more important ones.

Matear, director of community economic development in the northern Ontario city, was part of a panel at the annual general meeting of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario in Windsor this week. She made the case for northern towns to work hard to attract newcomers as part of their economic growth plans.

The business case is relatively simple: new Canadians can bring families and new businesses to areas that sorely need them, such as northern towns facing static and sometimes even shrinking populations.

"I think it's really encouraging that a lot of smaller and rural municipalities are getting interested in this," Matear says. "They want to help [with settlement], but they also recognize that immigration will help their communities, too."

The problem for northern communities is that the majority of immigrants to Canada choose to settle in a small number of large urban areas. Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, and Calgary settle two-thirds of the country's immigrants, with Toronto alone taking in over a third.

Simply building a welcoming Facebook page and website for potential new immigrants — translated into other languages, if possible — is a start, Matear says, as those are the kind of things that potential newcomers look for first before they even arrive in Canada.

"There's a lot of competition ... large cities have almost endless resources compared to the rest of us. It can be really difficult to market your community and promote its advantages," she says.

Matear says cities need to pursue a two-pronged approach. The first: directing services to newcomers to facilitate settlement, including basics such as helping them get a driver's license and alerting them to the need for winter tires. Some communities, such as North Bay, are also experimenting with small loans (less than \$5,000) to help new Canadians get settled.

The second prong involves the community, and is about making sure immigrants feel welcome enough to stay after they arrive. In larger cities an established population of newcomers from the same home country can help settle new arrivals, but smaller towns may not have that existing community to draw on.

"The community at large needs some awareness-building," says Matear. "We need to understand cultural differences and the overwhelming nature of moving to a new country, and to be tolerant of that."

In Timmins, this has meant not just policy changes (such as growing the ranks of diversity trainers available for businesses in the city), but also events to bring newcomers and established members of the community together, such as "Welcome to Timmins night," which involves non-government organizations, sports teams, city officials as well as the local MP and MPP for a social event.

Questions about Canadian immigration in 2016 are also unavoidably wrapped up in issues of how willing towns can accommodate some of the 55,000 refugees the federal government expects to settle this year, mostly from Syria.

Jim Estill, president and CEO of Danby appliances in Guelph, was part of the same panel discussion as Matear. Last year, he built a volunteer organization that matches Syrian refugees with two "mentor families": one that speaks Arabic at home and one that speaks English.

"Mentoring is key ... one of the things we ask people to do is ride the bus with families. There's a big difference between just giving someone a bus pass and riding the bus with them, especially if they don't speak the language," Estill told the audience.

He says that while government assistance is obviously necessary for the legal aspects of immigration, like Matear he says the more enduring results have come from community events.

"It's a potluck lunch. How much does that cost? When the community provides it it's basically free, and people end up making real friendships," Estill says. "You can't hire friends."

APPENDIX 6: BENCHMARK: EXAMPLE OF BEST PRACTICE - SMOOTH ROCK FALLS (ONTARIO) VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Our Vision

Our vision guides every aspect of our operations by describing what we need to accomplish in order to continue achieving sustainable, quality growth for the town of Smooth Rock Falls.

The community of Smooth Rock Falls is a vibrant, culturally diverse and active community, a place for families and small businesses to thrive. Residents take pride in their community, with a unique small town feel, a great natural environment and a high level of involvement and engagement. Our residents work together to strengthen our community and are welcoming of different cultures and viewpoints.

Our Mission

Our mission, which is enduring, declares our purpose as a community and a municipality and serves as the standard against which we weigh our actions and decisions.

The Town of Smooth Rock Falls leads in the establishment of conditions – social, community and economic – that make our community a great place to live. Through the provision of needed services, leadership in economic development and collaboration with other stakeholders, the Town ensures the wellbeing of the community and its residents, stimulating growth and initiative.

Our Values

Our values serve as a compass for our actions and describe how we behave in the world.

- *Client service excellence is paramount to everything we do.*

The Town exists to serve the needs of the residents of Smooth Rock Falls. Their needs guide our actions and are our first priority. In providing municipal services, we will seek to deliver quality services that meet the changing needs of our residents

- *Decision making is forward thinking and solution oriented, with an appropriate degree of measured risk.*

Our community's success is based on optimism, creativity, and the willingness to shape our own destiny. Everything is an opportunity. We recognize that success requires us to pursue new initiatives and embrace change and we encourage innovation in everything we do. We also appreciate the need to be prudent in our choices as not to unnecessarily expose the Town to risk.

- *As stewards of public resources, we will strive to maximize effectiveness and efficiency in everything we do.*

We recognize the trust that is placed in us by our residents and will act in a manner that is responsible and transparent. We will ensure that public funds are used wisely and for the intended purposes, with an appropriate balance between the cost of the service and the value provided. We will be open to different ways of doing things.

- *Collaboration is critical to our success.*

We will encourage other parties to work with us to in meeting the needs of our community and ensuring the well-being of our residents. We will be open to partnerships as a means of doing business and recognize that success for the community is dependent on all parties.

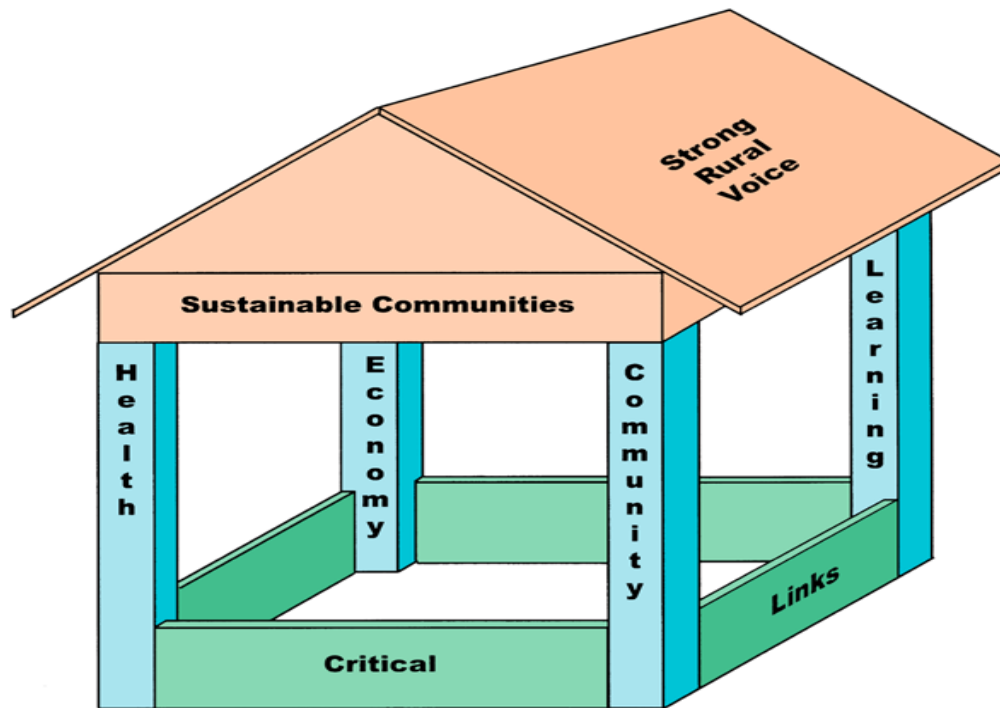
APPENDIX 7: BENCHMARK: EXCERPTS FROM THE REPORT: GRIFFITHS, D. & L. OUELLETTE. 2004. RURAL ALBERTA – LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

The comments below apply well to Dubreuilville and to most of Northern Ontario and other rural communities in Canada. They could be useful in articulating the needs of the Township and other Northern communities in order to educate Toronto politicians and bureaucrats.

The goal is to **create sustainable rural communities**. The first step is to ensure that the foundation of those communities - the four pillars of health care, education, economic growth, and community infrastructure - is strong.

That foundation must then be **linked to other elements of sustainability** - quality of life, support for youth, opportunities for Aboriginal populations and preservation of the environment.

Finally, they need to be protected, by ensuring a strong voice for rural people and communities in government decision-making.



The recommendations build on the Government of Alberta's three core businesses of people, preservation, and prosperity by:

- Investing in people through education and by building the capacity for leadership, decision-making, negotiation, and partnership.
- Ensuring access to water, land and clean air, now and in the future, and preserving the culture, heritage and infrastructure that supports rural development.
- Increasing economic diversity and employment opportunities by adding value to commodities and creating communities that can attract new investments.

Recognize the unique situation of small rural and remote schools in providing quality education.

- Provide needs-based funding rather than per capita funding to ensure quality education within reason.
- Create a "Small Schools Initiative" to support and enhance the excellent quality of education that is and should continue to be provided to rural students.
- Ensure that changes to funding formulas to rural schools are accompanied by a "no loss" provision and have a growth index equal to real cost increases.
- Enhance and support local capacity to attract and retain quality educators (particularly for math and science).

- Enhance or encourage stronger links between rural high schools and post-secondary institutions and industry to smooth out transitions and facilitate greater education options for rural youth within their communities.
- Encourage greater partnering between public and separate schools in providing educational programs and resources.
- Provide rural Alberta with reasonable local access to post-secondary, technical and professional training, and development.
 - Improve access to trades training in rural Alberta (trades awareness and credits provided in junior and high schools – Registered Apprenticeship Program, Tech Prep, Green Certificate Program).
 - Explore and, where possible, implement alternate delivery of education, including use of information technology and flexible times and locations.
 - Promote rural Alberta as an opportunity and provide targeted support for rural “grow your own” retention of professionals.
 - Locate to rural Alberta apprenticeship programs that have a predominant presence in rural-based industries.
- Build collaborative approaches with learning and skill development providers to better serve rural Alberta.
 - Promote, recruit and design programs to address needs and opportunities in rural Alberta.

Use the school in the community to the maximum. Have other education and training out of these centers.

Designate seats and provide incentives to students prepared to work in rural Alberta after completion of their education programs.

Provide incentives and rewards to institutions that deliver post-secondary education in rural Alberta.

- Implement the rural focused recommendations contained in the report of the MLA Committee on Lifelong Learning.

Implement all 17 recommendations with specific emphasis on rural needs and opportunities. Among these, notably: Increase Awareness of Adult Counseling and Career Development Services: Guidance counseling and career development be available to adults on an ongoing basis to support informed decision-making. This includes better communication about current learning opportunities, standards and requirements, and student financial information.

Encourage rural partnerships and regional cooperation as a driving force for rural growth and sustainability.

- Create incentives to foster cooperation and coordination between rural organizations.
- Provide tools and information, such as training models, labor mobility patterns, best practice information and inventories of successful ideas and models, to support successful collaboration and planning.
- Support regional alliances and partnership initiatives, including rural-urban joint projects.
- Support grassroots community development organizations.
- Encourage regional cooperation on joint community facilities and realign provincial partnership programs as required.

Community Infrastructure

Rural communities do not enjoy the economies of scale found in urban areas. They have a smaller tax base to draw on to fund projects. Transportation costs for moving supplies, equipment and people are higher. Rural Albertans face higher costs for basic utilities such as electricity, telephone service and natural gas. Access to advanced technology can be priced out of the reach of many rural Albertans.

Provide rural communities with the resources and support to build their local capacity for leadership, organizational development, asset assessment and empowerment.

Provide additional funding to support and expand the role and use of libraries to deliver community and regional based information and unique services.

Quality of Life

Economic development is tied to quality of life. People want to live in communities that meet their physical, social, and cultural needs. In today's labor market, competition to attract skilled employees is high. Businesses recognize this in choosing where to invest and locate their operations. In addition, community services and cultural activities can provide new business and employment opportunities and improve tourism potential.

Provide Mechanisms to Actively Engage Youth in Rural Development.

- Encourage the establishment of a rural youth council to act as a voice for rural youth issues and opportunities.
- Develop a rural youth conference to start the process of increased youth involvement in rural Alberta.
- Provide incentives such as scholarships, living subsidies or return-to-service bursaries to encourage youth to live and work in rural Alberta.
- Encourage youth entrepreneurship through a mentorship and business development program.
- Improve transition of rural students from high school to urban post-secondary institutions.

Aboriginal Albertans

Aboriginal Albertans share many of the same goals as other rural Albertans. They are interested in preservation of the natural environment and their cultural and community heritage. They are looking for economic development opportunities, especially for their young people. They are exploring alternative ways of providing essential services, like education and health, in their communities.

Aboriginal Albertans also are one of the fastest growing and youngest population groups in rural Alberta. The importance of their role in rural development will only increase in the future.

Recommendation

- **Ensure Aboriginal Albertans participate in rural development.**
 - Establish protocols to coordinate the efforts of the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta, the Northern Alberta Development Council, and other stakeholders on rural development projects involving Aboriginal communities, to promote efficiency and effectiveness.

The Environment

The natural environment is the backbone of many rural-based industries. It is also part of the appeal of rural areas as places to live and visit.

Strong rural communities are crucial to environmental sustainability. Rural Albertans have a vested interest in good management of water, land, and other natural resources, as it can directly affect their livelihood. They are the source of day-to-day support and service. At the same time, broad societal expectations may impose costs to rural Alberta—taking farmland out of production or limiting economic activities. All Albertans benefit from supporting rural Albertans ability to meet environmental standards and provide stewardship.

Environmental sustainability also presents economic opportunities in the areas of eco-tourism, alternate energy production and conservation practices and technology. These businesses have the greatest potential for development in rural areas, as that is where the resources are located and most current energy production and resource extraction occurs.

A Stronger Rural Voice

Just as Alberta has become urbanized, so has the perspective in government decision-making. Most government employees live and work in Edmonton and Calgary. In addition, when the government shifted its focus from program delivery to policy direction, many rural offices and outlets closed. This removed a part of the feedback loop that gave central decision-makers a view of how government actions affected rural communities.

Alberta's two largest urban centers—which, with their satellite communities, each include populations near the 1-million mark—have the resources and people to ensure their concerns are expressed. The concentration of key institutions such as universities, financial centers and research organizations in Edmonton and Calgary draws in highly skilled professionals, giving these cities leadership depth.

Rural Albertans need a mechanism to ensure their concerns are heard and the impact of decisions on their communities clearly understood. A Rural Development Authority, led by elected officials, will allow better identification of rural development needs and appropriate responses. A “rural lens” will permit policies and programs to be viewed from their perspective. Together, these initiatives would balance the strength of the urban voice and allow better representation of rural Alberta's contribution to the province's economic development.

There are many opportunities for rural and urban collaboration, and for joint projects between communities. What is often lacking is knowledge about those opportunities, and a means of coordinating action. A rural-focused development organization would support collaboration and partnership.

Rural communities would also benefit from a single point of access to information and services that support economic and community development. This would reduce the need to contact numerous offices and agencies to obtain full information on available programs and services.

Greater understanding of the needs of rural Alberta among members of the Government is also important. Regular opportunities for dialogue need to be created, to allow rural Albertans to access not just their own MLAs, but also those from urban centers and other areas of the province. Dialogue would also support greater rural-urban cooperation in provincial economic development.

APPENDIX 8: YOUTH RETENTION STRATEGIES

Liu, R. 2015 *Rural Youth Retention Strategy in Goderich, Ontario*. University of Guelph. The information below is excerpted from a case study by Liu (2015).

Many young people express that they would like to return to their home community if there is a job available (Malatest & Associates, 2002). As Fairfied (as cited in Redden, 2005) stated “*If we have no jobs for people who are leaving for better jobs... .. it is a problem we have got to address, both as an economic development and social issue*” (p. 31). Therefore, it is necessary to take employment into consideration for retaining and attracting youth to return in rural communities.

A number of government programs have been established to help a rural community create jobs. In 1998, the Ontario government has launched a \$35-million, four-year Rural Youth Job Strategy Program, which created jobs in rural Ontario and helped youth to get a good job near their home (Government of Canada, 2015). It was predicted that more than 17,300 employment opportunities for rural youth would be created (Government of Canada, 2015).

Ontario's Youth Jobs Strategy also invested \$195 million into the Youth Employment Fund in 2013 to help young people find work (MTCU, 2015a). Recently, it has reached its two-year target, and the program has helped employers across Ontario by offering 26,582 four-to-six-month jobs and training placements to youth (MTCU, 2015a).

Nancy Schaefer, president of Youth Employment Services (YES), stated that “*when our young people suffer from a lack of opportunities, they experience frustration and a loss of hope for the future. As the President of YES, I congratulate the provincial government for their leadership in creating and providing financial support for the Youth Employment Fund. Thousands of youths across the province are now in jobs thanks to this program. When youth work, communities work*” (MTCU, 2015b).

Additionally, for over a decade, the Ontario Government has provided the Rural Summer Jobs Service (RSJS) to employers in rural Ontario to create summer jobs for rural students (between ages 15 and 30) each year (OMAFRA, 2015a). Employers receive a \$2-per-hour reimbursement on salary paid to rural students during the summertime. The RSJS helped over 1,500 employers create more than 4,600 summer jobs for rural students in 2014 (OMAFRA, 2015a, website). The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), Jeff Leal, once stated, “*The Rural Summer Jobs Service program creates important employment opportunities for students and contributes to economic development in rural Ontario. The program gives young people necessary skills and experience that will help build the province’s highly skilled workforce*” (MTCU, 2015c).

The Ontario Government invested over \$176 million in 528 Rural Economic Development Program (RED) projects since 2003, which created over 36,000 jobs in rural Ontario (OMAFRA, 2015b, website). Several projects under the RED program provide internship opportunities for local youth (OMAFRA, 2006; OMAFRA, 2009). Besides, launched in 2006, the Youth Entrepreneurship Partnerships Initiative helps youth in Ontario develop important entrepreneurial skills, and three rural Ontario groups received funding for projects (OMAFRA, 2007).

APPENDIX 9: CASE STUDY: CITY DWELLERS MOVE TO A REMOTE AREA

Rural Development PEI. 2008. *A Rural Economic Development Strategy for Prince Edward Island*. 108 p.

The story below comes from page 49 of the above report:

Cameron Lerch and Laura Jane Koers had never been to the Maritimes before they moved to Prince Edward Island in late 2007. They were living in Victoria, B.C. but found housing prices, and the cost of living, too high to be able to fulfill their dream of a successful balance between family and career. They knew they wanted to move somewhere they could be near the coast, and they knew that a rural life would suit their goals.

“Prince Edward Island ended up being the perfect fit for several reasons,” explains Cameron Lerch. “For one, housing prices were low, so we were able to buy a house without a mortgage. And the Island had high speed internet access in many rural parts of the province, which would give us the opportunity to start our careers once we moved here.”

Lerch and Koers work in web development and consulting, so high speed internet access allows them to work from their home in Whim Road. But they didn’t start their careers immediately after the move. First, they had to renovate the farm house they’d purchased. They also started a blog called www.whimfield.com which documented their move from B.C.

Now the young couple is settled in their new rural Island home. And they have few regrets. “We’re really enjoying the rural lifestyle,” says Lerch. “Our community is very close knit. We’ve made friends with the neighbours, who’ve been very approachable and welcoming since our first day here.”

Lerch and Koers have also begun developing their businesses. Lerch runs Kibo Software, a web application development company, and Koers oversees Bright Flock, a web content and marketing consulting firm. Their goal, as of the move, is to make a successful living in their fields while having more free time to work on creativity and raise a family. Lerch says they’re well on the way to making that goal a reality.

APPENDIX 10: NOTE ON NUCLEAR ENERGY FROM SMALL MODULAR REACTORS

This appendix stems from discussions about two types of applications of a small nuclear reactor technology that has now been in use for about 60 years. In Sudbury, the MIRARCO Research Centre has an interest in the technology, which would result in reducing considerably the mining industry’s carbon footprint, as well as its energy costs.

In Pinawa, Manitoba, the local mayor is willing to use an existing Atomic Energy Canada facility to test a first Small Modular Reactor to supply the town of 1,300 with electricity. Both levels of provincial and federal governments are examining the technology in order to eventually replace diesel generators in remote communities, with the aim of dividing energy costs by four or more in the long run, and almost eliminate the carbon footprint of energy production in the country.

A Potentially Promising Technology for the Mining Industry and Surrounding Communities: Electricity from Nuclear Energy with SMRs (Small Modular Reactors)

On the Political side, both the Federal and the Ontario Provincial governments commissioned reports on the feasibility of installing small modular reactors (SMRs) using nuclear fuels in remote industrial sites (such as mine sites) and remote communities in Northern parts of Ontario, and in Arctic regions of Canada.

Small modular reactors (SMRs) are defined as nuclear reactors generally 300MW equivalent or less, designed with modular technology using module factory fabrication, pursuing economies of series production and short construction times (World Nuclear Association, 2018). They still need to be tested before approval for energy production use in Canada.

The World Nuclear Association (2018) lists the features of an SMR, including:

- Small power and compact architecture and usually (at least for nuclear steam supply system and associated safety systems) employment of passive concepts. Therefore, there is less reliance on active safety systems and additional pumps, as well as AC power for accident mitigation.
- The compact architecture enables modularity of fabrication (in-factory), which can also facilitate implementation of higher quality standards.
- Lower power leading to reduction of the source term as well as smaller radioactive inventory in a reactor (smaller reactors).
- Potential for sub-grade (underground or underwater) location of the reactor unit providing more protection from natural (*e.g.*, seismic or tsunami according to the location) or man-made (*e.g.*, aircraft impact) hazards.
- The modular design and small size lend itself to having multiple units on the same site.
- Lower requirement for access to cooling water – therefore suitable for remote regions and for specific applications such as mining or desalination.
- Ability to remove reactor module or in-situ decommissioning at the end of the lifetime.

Interview with Vic Pakalnis, CEO, MIRARCO Research Centre (Sudbury, Laurentian University):

« The first research on nuclear waste disposal was done at Pinawa – I was on a rock mechanics task force there in late 70's when I worked at Falconbridge (Vic Pakalnis, Sept. 2018).

Costs for diesel generators are 32c per kw/hr in Ontario; in the Arctic, 78c per kw/hr - SMRs – will likely cost 15c per kw/hr and zero GHG 's so we are saving the planet (Pakalnis).

Attached is a slide deck I presented on subject of SMRs in Mining (Pakalnis). » The slides present an overview of the mining industry as of March 2018, with potential perspectives and opportunities, including a possible use of new energy sources available as alternatives to diesel and other GHG (Greenhouse Gas) sources.

The Unsubstantiated Fear of Nuclear Energy

There is an ideology according to which nuclear energy is portrayed as being the cause of deadly accidents. There have been three instances of major accidents reported in the World since the inception of nuclear energy production in the mid-twentieth century, one in the United States, one in Ukraine (Soviet Union at the time), and one in Japan. There are two jurisdictions in the World who have been using nuclear energy to produce over 60% of their total electricity needs for over 35 years, Ontario and France: none of the seventy-six reactors located there have reported fatalities. Moreover, there were no deaths reported at Three Mile Island in the U.S. in 1979, 31 deaths were reported following Chernobyl (Soviet Union) in 1986 and no deaths in Fukushima (Japan) in 2011 (the reactors did shut down as they were supposed to), even if 34 died during evacuation from causes unrelated to radiation exposure.

However, nuclear energy seems to be associated, in the public's mind, with atomic bombs and the risk of nuclear war that had been present throughout the Cold War (1949-1989), notwithstanding the dramatic imagery surrounding the U.S. bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Japan) of 1945.

Meanwhile, according to the European Environment Agency 2018 Report, 68,000 people die prematurely each year, in Europe only, from breathing toxic diesel fumes that contain NOx, the deadly Nitrogen Oxides. Fortunately, diesel car sales started collapsing in Europe, where cities such as Athens, Rome, Madrid, Oslo, Stuttgart, Dusseldorf, and Paris have declared bans, but diesel fumes still poison workers and citizens in most of the world, including Canada, where very high thresholds are still legal. Automotive producers are gradually reducing production of diesel cars; however, it will take several years to modify the infrastructure in order to convert refineries from diesel production to other products. Most large oil companies are adding clean energy production to their products portfolios.

The Myth of Clean Hydro Energy

Studies commissioned by First Nations in Quebec and in Manitoba, as well as Labrador, have established that water level management by hydro companies causes ongoing environmental damage to flora, fauna, and destroys habitats for land and water animals; it also destroys fisheries and thousands of years old modes of living in harmony with nature.

Myths About Renewable Energies

There is a belief that renewable energies (i.e., solar and wind, plus hydro) could replace 100% of energy needs. "To satisfy the world's needs for renewable energy by 2050, it would require building windmills and solar panels over an area of the USA, Mexico, Central America and the inhabited portion of Canada."

APPENDIX 11: NOTE ON DEMOGRAPHIC GENERATIONS (JEAN-CHARLES CACHON)

Marketers and demographers divide populations into peer groups of people raised in distinct and evolving socio-economic contexts, which shaped their attitudes and their behaviors in all aspects of life. Each cohort or generation displays identifiable and stable lifestyle trends. Countries have varying demographic cohorts depending on specific population local circumstances. In Canada, Statistics Canada has defined demographic generations according to the Pew Research Center's classification, as shown below.

The Greatest Generation: Born 1900-1928

Born at the beginning of the twentieth century, they are described as driven, motivated, with a strong work ethic. Surviving two world wars and the Great Depression, they lived frugally and saved as much as they could in better times. They are characterized as loyal and committed.

Interwar ('Silent') Generation: Born 1928-1945

Mostly born between the two world wars, this Canadian generation lived through the consequences of the Great Depression of 1929-1932, as well as through the Second World War. They had more children than their parents, as they rode the wave of increasing prosperity and growth from 1945 to 1973. They were then hit by hyperinflation during the oil crises of 1973-1982, by the 1984 federal fiscal reform that shifted most of the tax burden from corporation to middle class individuals, while interest rates remained several hundred base points above inflation. These policies provoked the 1991 collapse of the Canadian economy, which took almost ten years to recover from.

Baby Boom Generation: Born 1944-1965

Nicknamed the « Me Generation », it is characterized by consumers' desire to express their personality. The young dreamed of having cars, a home, a family, and a variety of products. Many started their career during a high inflation era and dwindling real income. Mortgages skyrocketed and home ownership became an impossible dream for the lower middle class: many manufacturing jobs disappeared from Canada towards Mexico and the U.S. following free trade agreements. They grew up with television, which

influenced their social behavior and way of life. Facing unexpected financial hardships, they had less children than their parents, with the help of contraceptives, widely marketed and available after 1965. This allowed large masses of Canadian women to join the workforce.

Generation X (or « Baby-boom echo »): Born 1966-1980

This generation grew up in an environment where the PC (personal computer) became everywhere present. In Canada, high inflation, high interest rates and increased income taxes increased the gap between high- and low-income social strata. The 2007-2009 financial crisis exacerbated their economic situation. Many of them stayed in their parents' home well into adulthood or had to come back. They have less children than their parents and have a lesser tendency to marry. Many left rural communities and regions to move to metropolitan cities.

Generation Y (or « Millennials »): Born 1981-1996

Millennials grew with Internet. They played on their parents' keyboards since infancy, while many of them carried a smartphone through high school. They have a lesser interest in material goods than their parents, or they have a lesser urge to acquire them (they can already access everything at their parents'). Many of them felt forced to stay home due to sky high housing rents combined with below poverty entry jobs' salaries.

Generation Z: Born 1997-2012

Gen Z were born with a smartphone. They see the most recent technologies as an integrant part of their life. Virtual communities are important to them, but they also value personal contacts with people living near them in large cities. Most of them study in postsecondary institutions and some of them travel out of province or to foreign countries to educate themselves. They are preoccupied by environmental issues to a higher degree than older generations. Gender gaps are less pronounced, dress codes include unisex garments, and the presence of various sexual orientations is more accepted than among older generations. In workplaces, Gen Z people also display more ability to accept diversity as a matter of fact.

Generation Alpha: Born 2013 and after

Gen Alphas are still somewhat of a question mark, but they're already known to be attracted to social networks and virtual visibility. This is how they shape their view of the world. They are mostly raised in suburban areas, where housing is more adapted to families with young children. Ontario Alphas have been particularly affected by lock downs and chaotic schooling from March 2020 to early 2023 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

APPENDIX 12: RESOURCE REVENUE SHARING PLEDGED BY ONTARIO CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT

Kirkland Lake council reminds province of its campaign pledge to share resource revenue - Erik White CBC

PCs pledged between \$20 and \$30 million in resource revenue for northern communities - Posted: Jan 10, 2019, 7:26 AM ET

The Progressive Conservatives promised to give First Nations, cities and towns in the north a cut of the provincial revenue from all resource industries, worth between \$20 and \$30 million every year.

"They're going to get a fair percentage of the revenues and we're going to look out for the people of the north," now Premier Doug Ford said in an interview with CBC during the 2018 election campaign.

But little has been said since the Conservatives formed the government six months ago.

The town council in Kirkland Lake recently passed a resolution urging the province to move ahead with its plans.

"I don't think it's forgotten. I just wanted to send another reminder that we're here and we expect them to live up to their platform," says councilor Rick Owen, who tabled the resolution.

He says there are many questions still to be answered about how the system will be set up, and how each community's share will be calculated.

Owen says the extra funding could be vital for Kirkland Lake, which is struggling to keep property taxes low with transfer payments from the provincial government getting smaller and smaller.

No one from the provincial government was made available for an interview, but two different ministries did provide CBC with a statement.

Neither contained any details of how the money will be handed out, now when that might start.

The Ministry of Finance statement:

“Resource revenue sharing in the development of natural resources will allow a win-win situation for Northern communities and businesses. Our Provincial forestry strategy has already attracted historic investments in Northern Ontario, and our government will move forward with a new approach to unlock the vast potential of the Ring of Fire.

We will continue to explore ways to encourage development of natural resources across the North, by helping Northern towns and Indigenous communities share in the benefits of resource development from mining, forestry and aggregates.

Our support for rural and Northern communities in Ontario is unwavering.”

The statement from the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines:

“Our province is fortunate to be rich in natural resources and opportunity. Re-affirmed in the 2018 Fall Economic Statement, our government is committed to moving forward with resource revenue sharing.

As we develop natural resources, we will continue to build strong partnerships with northern towns and indigenous communities.

Resource revenue sharing agreements will help bolster job creation and economic growth across the north, and communities will see direct economic benefits from the forestry and mining developments near their communities.”

Erik White is a CBC journalist based in Sudbury. He covers a wide range of stories about northern Ontario. Connect with him on Twitter @erikjwhite. Send story ideas to erik.white@cbc.ca

AUDIO: Ford promises revenue-sharing with northern communities on resource projects

The Canadian Press · Posted: May 01, 2018, 5:09 PM ET | Last Updated: May 1, 2018

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/doug-ford-revenue-sharing-northern-communities-1.4643832>