

**THE CORPORATION OF THE  
MUNICIPALITY OF TEMAGAMI**  
P.O. BOX 220  
TEMAGAMI, ONTARIO P0H 2H0  
(705) 569-3421  
FAX: (705) 569-2834  
E-MAIL: [visit@temagami.ca](mailto:visit@temagami.ca)  
WEBSITE: [www.temagami.ca](http://www.temagami.ca)



Ministry of Infrastructure  
Delegation, August 18, 2020

Good Afternoon

First, please allow us to extend congratulations on your appointment as Minister and thank you for meeting with us.

The Municipality of Temagami covers just over 1900 square kilometres and is situated at the north end of the District of Nipissing bordering the District of Timiskaming. While our full time population is between 800 and 900 (depending on which source you use), seasonally our population explodes as we have a multitude of lakes within our boundary. There are also four Provincial Parks and other tourist draws from the Temagami Tower to the White Bear Forest to the Old Growth Trails on Lake Temagami.

Historically, employment was through mining, forestry, and a significant number of provincial personnel mostly employed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. While prospecting still occurs from time to time, similar to most other historic mining areas, these operations no longer exist. The same can be said for the forestry. While there is a group working on improvements to the state and harvest of the Temagami Forest, the industry will most likely not be restored to its former glory. As for the government workers? Well even if there was a policy change, the majority of government buildings are no longer standing.

So we are not all 'doom and gloom' there are a few community groups as well as a dedicated core of individuals that work to promote Temagami as a place to live and do business, reality is that it will be some time before our full time population reaches past levels. Council has also been rather ambitious this term with work on Strategic Planning, Service Delivery Review and Waste Management Master Planning while we also have been experiencing a different way of operating resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. We are now at the point where we are finalizing the various studies to have many things implemented in the next year, just before Municipal Elections are being organized.

The Municipality of Temagami does not sit idle waiting for things to be done. An example of this is the Northern Community Broadband project of CENGN. Access to reliable higher speed internet was a cornerstone of election platforms for many of our Councillors. Even before we knew of any programs that could help us realize this dream, the Municipality, in partnership with Temagami First Nation, completed an internet survey which highlighted the various speeds available and the barriers to more reliable internet. This study was instrumental when the CENGN call for community partners was made and, working with Leapfrog Telecom, as we speak, the first installation phase of this project is happening. We thank you for your support of CENGN and the commitment of acting to increase high speed internet access in rural and northern Ontario.

We are also thankful for the extension that was granted relating to asset management planning. As noted, we have many structural pieces being worked on as we reset the Municipality of Temagami for the future. This has also included a complete overhaul of our Administrative Staff that started in 2018. Some additions have come with little experience so there is much training and mentoring required of our Senior Staff and the extra time provided for asset management planning will allow us to better incorporate asset management principals into our daily process and our annual budget.

While we are proud of what we have accomplished and excited about finishing the process, there are a couple areas we believe are simply beyond our means. We have, unsuccessfully, applied for funding for each of the following. While we feel our circumstances are rather unique, either one may also be relevant to other municipalities and could, perhaps, require different solutions.

As you may be aware, it was commonplace in the 1960s and 70s for the Province to create water wastewater treatment system in smaller locations. As we moved through the latter stages of the 1980s and into the 1990s, many of these were transferred to the municipalities where they were located. With the Clean Water Act and other requirements of these systems, it is estimated that in order to be cost effective systems require a minimum of 1,000 users. In our case, we have 350 users. This would be trying enough but when you consider that we have two water and wastewater systems it is financially impossible to keep the systems in good repair without assistance. When funding programs are announced, like the current ICIP Green Program, we have to choose which system we use in the application. For example, we have two water towers that are in need of major repairs. With this program we cannot apply for water tower improvements but instead we have to pick a water tower as the two systems are not connected. While we will be considering what makes the most sense for our users when we make the application later this month, we are hopeful that this time we are successful.

Another area beyond our means is our Lake Temagami Access Road. Initially, this road was created to access mining claims and operations. Similar to logging roads, there was little foundational work completed and we do try to improve the road a little each year. A few years ago, an engineer was engaged who provided an estimate of \$32 million to reconstruct this 17 km road. Given that our total budget is a little over \$7 million, you can see how this is beyond what we could consider. Certainly, we can revisit the vision of the engineer in an attempt to lower the construction costs, however, when you examine the users of the road, about half the traffic is from Temagami First Nation. Located on Bear Island, Temagami First Nation uses the road to access Lake Temagami. While they are supportive of our funding applications, they believe they cannot partner with this project as it does not reach their reserve. They also have not supported any road maintenance due to their funding restrictions. This leaves our ratepayers fully carrying the financial burden of a road that, if it was located 40 km to the south, would be fully funded by the Province. The last time we applied for a project on this road we were told that if it had been a joint project that it would have been funded.

We do believe we are doing what we can to keep our infrastructure working. As an example, once the long-term borrowing is complete, our water and wastewater rates are estimated to be 45% higher than they were at the start of this term. That being said, we are not able to meet our infrastructure needs alone. We are not in a geographic location that provides neighbours to submit joint applications and, in the case of the Lake Temagami Access Road, are continually paying for items that should not be funded through municipal funds.

We believe the grant structure should be examined to ensure that municipalities without neighbours are not disadvantaged and that the Province assume responsibility for access roads to First Nation Communities. We trust that you will give this request due consideration. Thank you for your time.