

LOCAL NEWS

Cramahe economic development report released

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Cramahe Township released its economic development report on June 21 to an interested group of local business people at the Keeler Centre.

Report writer John Morand, of Morand and Associates, took the audience through the report.

The report clearly identified some of the factors limiting growth in the township.

The single most-critical issue that needs to be dealt with is the need for fully-serviced land. Competition with neighbouring communities will be difficult without fully-serviced sites. Without them the township cannot create new jobs by drawing possible companies in the distribution, metal fabrication and associated industries which support manufacturing in Ontario.

Lack of high-tech infrastructure and "critical mass" eliminate Cramahe from the knowledge-based industries, predicted to be the growth areas in the economy in the next 10 years.

Targets

The Morand report identifies tourism, agri-tourism, arts and crafts and culture as targets for growth. Mr. Morand

commended the efforts of a few people in the community to target market the Apple Route which runs through Cramahe. He also applauded the Cramahe Parks and Recreation vision statement for being on the mark and linked to economic development.

The report echoed statements made by Cramahe Parks and Recreation Director Ken Wood about the economic value of recreation and tourism to the community.

Mr. Morand sees recreation as a critical component that is considered by site relocation specialists when shortlisting prospective communities.

On the positive side, the report states its confidence in Cramahe Council's commitment and in its recent actions to rationalize committees and increase community involvement in priority setting. The report also noted talk of a new financial deal for municipalities.

Changes in government viewpoints

There have been changes in the federal and provincial perspective since Cramahe Township established a new mandate for its Economic Development Advisory Committee in 2003.

The Oak Ridges Moraine and proposed greenbelt have limited growth in much of

the area around Toronto. Northumberland County has been designated a growth area by the Province, and the Federal Government has indicated that a new airport at Pickering will go ahead in the next 10 years.

To attain any success Cramahe must move forward now with preparatory work with water and sewers, broadband internet service, cooperative programs and new marketing initiatives.

The Economic Development Advisory Committee has looked at where we are now and where we want to be. The result of that is a draft vision statement and some strategies to move the township forward. As well, the Action Plan provided to the EDAC on March 17, 2005 was to serve as an action plan envisaged in the previous report "Shaping Our Future".

The Vision Statement

The Vision statement reads, "Cramahe is a vibrant municipality committed to its citizens' quality of life, natural resources, cultural heritage and ongoing sustainable development. As Cramahe grows it will balance history with progress to encourage, build and maintain an enlightened economically-sustainable and diverse community for the benefit of all."

Under the vision statement there are 21 core values which will be used to guide the interaction between all parties as the township moves forward.

Surveys taken by Mr. Morand's company revealed that businesses want clear lines of communication and one-stop shopping when they deal with the Township. They also felt the municipality should be flexible when dealing with business.

Tax rates, public image and access to technology were seen by business as the Township's worst failings.

Speaking to the topic of tax rates, Mr. Morand reminded his audience that tax rates are offset by quality of life in the rural areas that cannot be matched in the cities where taxes are lower.

The Morand Report detailed strategies to deal with a variety of issues including community profile, public image, partnerships, technology access, infrastructure needs, taxes and the influx of people and industry from the Greater Toronto Area.

Some of these are outlined in the Township's Action Plan, with dates of implementation, responsibilities, anticipated problems and results.

JENSEN, PREBEN VALDEMAR

At the Northumberland Hills Hospital, Cobourg on Wednesday, June 29, 2005. Preben Jensen, in his 80th year, was the beloved husband of Rigmor Jensen (nee Bjerrum). Dear father of Finn Jensen (Brenda) of Castleton, Lis Rom (Joe) of Colborne and Mike Jensen (Mary Ann) of Colborne. Also survived by 5 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren. A service in memory of Preben will be held at the MacCoubrey Funeral Home, 11 King St. W., Colborne on Thursday, July 7, 2005 at 11am. Interment Castleton Cemetery. Friends may call at the funeral home on Wednesday from 2-4 and 7-9pm. If desired, donations in memory of Preben can be made to the Canadian Cancer Society or the Canadian Diabetes Association. Condolences and donations to www.maccoubrey.com.

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