

## Accentuating the positive with some recent great news in the Fort Town

As the old song goes, you've got to accentuate the positive.

And that's exactly what I'll be doing in my Journal columns through the month of July. So for the next few weeks, this will be a COVID-free zone accentuating the positive, eliminating the negative, latching on to the affirmative, and never, ever messing with Mr. In-Between.

I certainly have a lot of good news to report this week. Prescott's economy continues to chug along despite the horror-show aftermath of the lockdown caused by the Virus That Shall Not Be Named (in July). We have been fortunate enough to celebrate a number of great announcements, openings, and initiatives over the past few days. Such as the following...

### Glitz Spa

I was thrilled to be able to cut the ribbon at the grand opening of the Downtown Prescott River-Walk District's latest business, Glitz Spa, alongside Councillors McConnell, Ostrander, Shankar, and Young and a number of



### MAYORAL MUSINGS

Mayor Brett Todd

other socially distanced and masked well-wishers last Friday afternoon. Huge thanks are due to developers Ashley and Josee Davies for another great downtown initiative—and just a year after they opened their hit Zens Inn!

Glitz is an innovative business concept currently sweeping North America. Single or double brick-and-mortar stores—or even warehouses in larger urban centres—are divided into smaller spas or suites. This cuts down space requirements and costs for operators, which can be key at a time when old-school stores are running into challenging circumstances due to online shopping, escalating real-estate prices and rents, and so forth.

So where there once were two stores on King St. in Prescott, there are now a total of eight suites at Glitz. Best of all, seven of those have already been filled with six separate personal services ranging from

hair styling to health and beauty needs. Where we cut the ribbon for Glitz as a single entity on Friday, we really welcomed a whopping six new businesses to Prescott.

Check out Glitz whenever you can and welcome these new entrepreneurs to Downtown Prescott. And also take note of the renovations taking place upstairs, as Ashley and Josee continue their work on turning long-shuttered apartments into beautiful new residential rental opportunities.

### Alantra Leasing

Council officially approved the execution of a purchase agreement on Monday night selling 10 acres of land beside the OPP station in our 401 North Industrial Park to Alantra Leasing. The company, which specializes in mobile trailers and modular buildings and is headquartered in New Brunswick, offered \$25,000 per acre for the location, where they plan to build, assemble, and store their products. An estimated 5-7 jobs will be created initially, scaling up to 15-20.

We all welcome Alantra to Prescott and look forward to a long and successful relationship with the company here in town. All the best to Alantra as well as they continue to expand from their home base in the Maritimes to Quebec and Ontario.

### Augusta partnership okayed

But wait, there's more! Another exciting item approved on Monday evening by the councils in both Prescott and Augusta was the Economic Development Strategy, which now formally goes to tender. Mayor Doug Malanka and I first announced this plan jointly at the Augusta Mayors' Breakfast back at the beginning of March.

After some, um, unavoidable delays over the past few months, Mayor Malanka and I got the band back together in recent weeks and finalized recommendations to take to our respective councils simultaneously at meetings on Monday night. I was very happy to get the text from Mayor Malanka that his council approved the recommendation

unanimously, and then even happier when our own council did the exact same thing shortly thereafter.

This study, which will roll out in the coming months and be finalized early next year, will lay the groundwork for some of the most intimate and coordinated economic cooperation that has ever been seen between two municipalities in our region. It will examine any and all ways that we can work better together and more efficiently for our residents and for our economies.

Much of the focus will be on our industrial lands stretching from our north-end parks on either side of Hwy. 401 all the way to the Invista Site in Maitland. But it will also take in all manner of other opportunities and examine cost-sharing, revenue-sharing, employment lands, and so forth.

I really want to thank Mayor Malanka for being such a tremendous partner for progress. While Augusta and Prescott have enjoyed warm relations for some time now—including

working together on both the new arena replacing our late, great Leo Boivin Community Centre and a comprehensive service delivery review—this takes that partnership to a whole new level. We are showing what great things can happen when two municipalities work together.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the municipal modernization funding provided by the Ontario government. Great appreciation goes out to Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Steve Clark here, as these dollars (each of us received in the neighbourhood of \$600,000) will pay for the entirety of this study with much left over for other initiatives, and even for implementation of recommendations arising from the strategy.

This is an exciting time for us. Even with the major economic challenges out there right now, we are doing our best to move forward both here in Prescott and in tandem with our neighbours in Augusta and elsewhere so that we emerge stronger and more prosperous than ever.

## An update from Township of Edwardsburgh-Cardinal

It has been a very quiet spring since the Provincial Declaration of Emergency due to COVID-19 on March 17. Although all of our major essential-service industries have been able to keep working and keeping people employed, they have all taken significant steps to protect their workers and that is a very significant achievement. Together Ingreedion, Prysmian, Greenfield Global, Jones Rail/Crews, HFI Pyrotechnics, Giant Tiger, and Port of Johnstown employ approximately 2,000 workers and the management teams of those companies are to be congratulated on the fine



### E-C MAYOR NEWS

Pat Sayeau

work they have done implementing enough safety measures that there has not been a single COVID case reported.

On the other end of the scale, our smaller non-essential businesses, such as our restaurants and retail outlets, were all initially forced to close and lay-off large numbers of workers. It is only recently that we are seeing signs of these businesses re-opening under carefully controlled condi-

tions and safety protocols.

Flying Canoe Hard Cider, which last year relocated their production facility from Ottawa to Spencerville, experienced a significant loss of sales due to the restaurant and eating-establishment closures. However, just recently they opened an on-site retail outlet, Mackintosh Ciderhouse, in Spencerville at their production facility, thanks to our MP Steve Clark, who worked hard to bring about a change in a fifty-year-old regulation which prevented them from retailing their hard cider from their own store front. They are now work-

ing hard to make up for the initial lost sales.

The Bridgeview Restaurant, as a non-essential service, was also forced to close in March, and although they experimented with a take-out menu, the owners have listed the business and building for sale. The buyer, Mr. Sean Lucey, owner of Windmill Brewery and Newport BBQ & Bakery, has recently negotiated a new long-term land lease with the Port of Johnstown, thus enabling him to close the deal to purchase the business and building from the previous owners. We are informed that extensive renovations

are soon to be underway, with a view to early outdoor patio dining while waiting for the province to open indoor dining.

A number of other businesses who were forced to put this year's investment plans "on-hold" due to COVID-19, have now reconnected with the township and talks are underway for at least two new developments which could take place later this year or early in 2021.

We continue to pursue our Natural Gas Extension and Expansion Project, and are pleased to report that Enbridge GAS will soon confirm that our County

Road 2/ Spencerville project has been forwarded to the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) for additional review. The process presently in place requires that the OEB submit a list of approved projects directly to the Minister of Energy by mid August, which has now been extended to mid October due to COVID-19. In anticipation that our project will be strong enough to stand on its own through the OEB review and get forwarded to the Ministry of Energy, council has requested a delegation meeting with the Minister of Energy, Hon. Jeff Yurek, during the AMO Conference in August.

## Council gives go ahead on joint request with Prescott

At a special council meeting held on Monday, July 6, council approved a motion authorizing the township's CAO, Ray Morrison, to draft for council approval a joint request for proposal (RFP) with the Town of Prescott for the conduct of an economic development study in support of an economic development strategy.

It was noted in the report that accompanied the motion that we are seeing an increase in the speed of real estate transactions in our area based on a number of factors ranging from centrality of location to favourable land costs relative to several nearby major population centres of Ottawa, Montreal and To-



### AUGUSTA MATTERS

Mayor Doug Malanka

ronto of over one million people each. It was further noted that the quantity and quality of inquiries from developers, investors, and other prospective buyers of agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial lands across our municipality have been rising steadily, and we believe that Augusta is poised to benefit from economic growth and prosperity in the decade ahead.

Finally, Council was told in the report that the study will be valuable for our municipality to pos-

ition itself with progressive strategic and economic development plans which reflect the short and long-range goals of our council and community members. These plans will be based on the knowledge gained through our Service Delivery Review and development of our Community Improvement Plan, both of which are in progress.

As noted in the staff report, commercial and industrial economic development in Augusta and Prescott is expected to primarily occur in "areas of employment" between the St. Lawrence River and County Road 26; and between County Road 15 and our eastern municipal boundaries.

A comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for our entire municipality will enable residential growth, growth for small-to-medium sized enterprises (SMEs), home-based businesses, our agricultural and bio-industrial sectors as well as commercial and industrial development in "areas of employment" to be evaluated in this joint Economic Development Study.

The economic development study will assist in the development of our economic development strategy and will require a multidisciplinary team to review current and future infrastructure, land and water use and availability and infrastructure

servicing options. In terms of timelines it is hoped that: the RFP will be developed by the end of the July, issued and proposals received by August 2020, evaluated in September, awarded in October 2020, with the study occurring between November 2020 and March 2021. April 2021 onwards will see implementation of an economic development strategy.

A short time after Augusta Township's council meeting, Mayor Todd of the Town of Prescott advised me that his council had just unanimously approved a similar motion. It's worth noting that this is not about amalgamating our municipalities, but is

a partnership initiative to attract agricultural, residential, commercial and industrial development into our municipalities to grow our region in terms of economic development, jobs and quality of life and well being issues. I look forward to working with Prescott towards goals that mutually and fairly benefit both of our municipalities.

Council was also advised that the Maynard waste management site will be closed effective July 6, 2020 for paving of the parking and unloading area. The North Augusta waste management depot will be open throughout the week to ensure services remain available to all residents.