

TOWNSHIP OF IGNACE TOWN HALL MEETING

MARCH 23, 2026

Ignace Recreation Centre Upper Hall
6:00 - 8:30 p.m.



TOWN HALL MEETING FORMAT

- Opening remarks & land acknowledgement - (5 min.)
- Review of format and rules of conduct - (5 min.)
- Presentation by Township administration - (30 min.)
- Submitted questions and answers - (30 min.)
- Public questions and answers - (Until 8:25 p.m.)
- Closing remarks - (5 min.)



Town Hall Meeting

RULES OF CONDUCT

Listen Respectfully

- Allow speakers to finish their remarks without interruption.
- Please no side conversations while someone is presenting, asking a question, or answering a question.

Wait Your Turn to Speak

- Questions from the public will be permitted at the set time.
- Line up at the mic or raise your hand.
- Limit to one question per person, then return to the end of the line.

Remain Calm & Courteous

- Speak respectfully to others, even if you disagree.
- Personal attacks, shouting, or disruptive behaviour will not be permitted and you will be asked to leave.

Keep Questions Brief and Relevant

- Limit questions to one minute each.
- We can only answer questions related to municipal governance and operations.
- If Council or staff cannot answer a question tonight, we will follow up.

TOWNSHIP OF IGNACE

2026 UPDATE

MARCH 23, 2026

Presented by:

- Aaron Gullins, Chief Administrative Officer
- Lesley Sterling, Clerk/Treasurer



Explore Our **POSSIBILITIES**

- **Ignace is growing!**
- **Exciting new developments launching soon:**
 - Residential housing subdivision
 - NWMO Centre of Expertise
 - KDSB seniors' housing
 - NWMO Deep Geological Repository (DGR)
- **Business attraction & expansion**
 - Confidential negotiations with several developers
 - Information will be released as it becomes available



Residential **NEW HOUSING**

- **Bruno's Contracting awarded contract for subdivision development**
 - 46 serviced lots on Superior Avenue just north of apartment building (2026)
 - 213 unserviced lots behind houses on West Street
 - Multi-residential across from the school
 - Bruno's will be clearing the land and building homes and neighbourhoods
- **Private projects and sale of surplus properties**
- **Expect population to double in 10 years!**



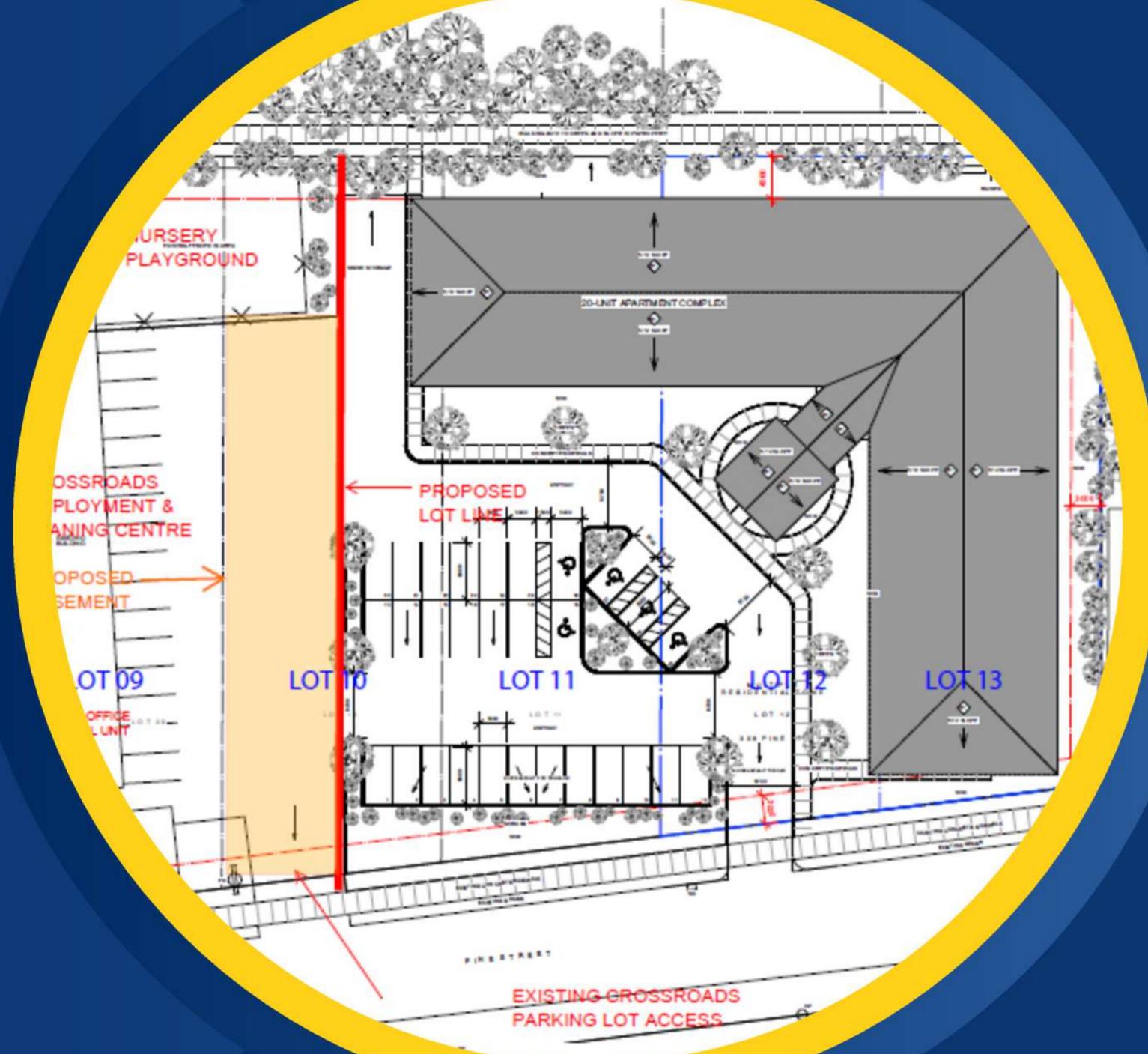
Centre of **EXPERTISE**

- **NWMO Head Office & Research Facility**
 - 65,000 sq. ft. building on Hwy. 17
 - Directly west of Township Office
 - International attraction
 - \$21M+ estimated value
 - 67 acre property (use will be determined by NWMO)
 - Increase in commercial tax revenue
 - Construction 2026
 - Opening 2028
 - Relocation of 150+ head office jobs



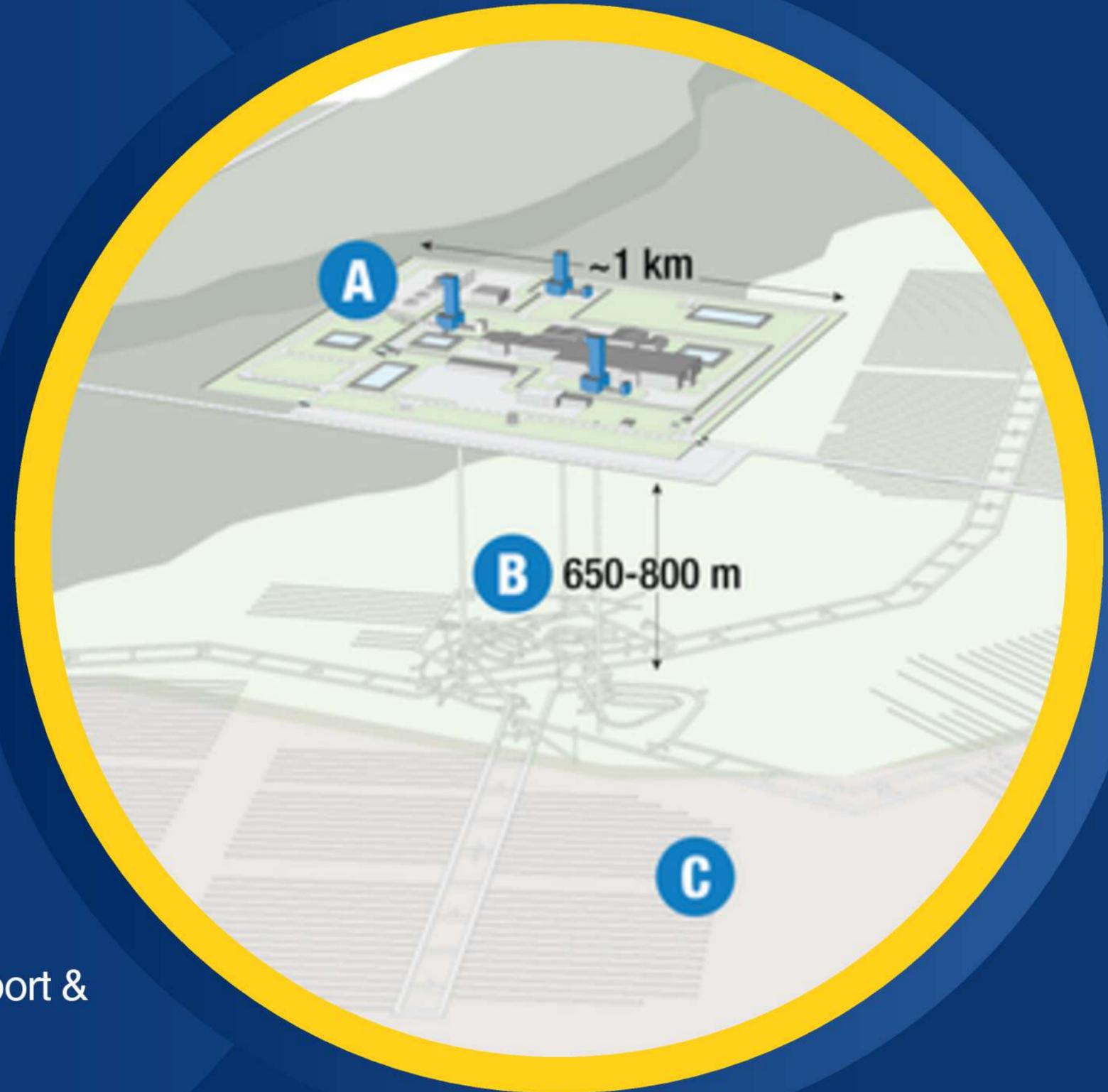
New **SENIORS' HOUSING**

- **20-unit Seniors' Housing**
 - Owned by Kenora District Services Board
 - Land between Silver Tops and Crossroads plaza
 - Discussed at March 9, 2026 Council meeting
 - Anticipated construction by 2029
- **Downsizing creates potential to sell existing, affordable family homes in Ignace**



Canada's First DEEP GEOLOGICAL REPOSITORY

- **\$26B+ DGR project 40 km west of Ignace**
 - Regulatory licensing phase: 2025 to 2031
 - Site Prep & Construction: 2031 to 2042
 - Operation: 2043 to 2104
 - Monitoring & Decommissioning: 2105+
- **81-year Hosting Agreement (2024 to 2105)**
 - Annual operating payments, milestone payments, support & benefit payments and emplacement fees
 - 2025 \$ value indexed annually for CPI



Spin Off

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Residential Housing

- New homes
- Multi-family units
- Increased population



Local Businesses

- Construction industry
- Stores & restaurants
- Accommodations



Service Diversity

- Personal care
- Tourism
- Recreation

"If you build it, they will come."

- *Field of Dreams (1989)*

Local

ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Ignace has great opportunities for small businesses!

If you are interested in starting a business, contact PACE:

- Community Futures Development Corporation serving rural Canadians
- Funded by FedNor in Northern Ontario
- Loans, advice and support for entrepreneurs, small businesses, and community groups

Patricia Area Community Endeavours

61 King Street, Unit 5, Dryden, ON

(807) 221-3293

www.pace-cf.on.ca

*Excellent
Resources*

Business Incentives **COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

- **Facade improvement grant:** 50% up to \$5,000
- **Signage improvement grant:** 50% up to \$2,500
- **Commercial space conversion grant:** 50% up to \$5,000
- **Municipal land disposition program:** Sale of surplus land at up to 90% below market value where the proponent is prepared to build within two years
- **Landscaping and Parking Area Improvement Grant:** 50% up to \$5,000
- **Tax Increment Equivalent Grant:** 100% rebate of municipal property tax increment resulting from redevelopment or improvements
- **Accessibility grant:** 50% up to \$2,500

Community Improvement Plan **DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES**

- **Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Grant:** Tax breaks for properties undergoing environmental remediation
- **Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Grant:** 50% of the cost of up to two studies, up to \$3,000 per study
- **Planning and Building Permit Fee Grant:** Up to 100% of the cost of Official Plan amendment applications, Zoning By-law amendment applications, Minor Variance applications, or Demolition applications where new development is proposed

Surplus PROPERTY SALES

- 36 lots in the mobile home area on the south end of town
- 3 lots along Railway Street
- 1 lot on East Street
- Contact Keith for planning information
- Submit Expressions of Interest with 5% deposit to Lesley in sealed envelope by April 13, 2026
- Provide as much information as possible
- See By-law 08.2026 for details



Top Priority

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

2022

Audit Underway

\$6.8M

NWMO Funds 2026

\$2.35M

2025 Tax Revenue

Responsible financial management is essential for long-term community sustainability.

1. Get caught up with overdue audits and FIRs within three years.
2. Reconcile reserve accounts and NWMO dedicated funds.
3. Develop fiscally responsible budgets and long-term investment strategies.
4. Establish adequate reserves and investments tied to Asset Management Plan.

3-Year Plan

FISCAL RECOVERY

2026

- Complete 2022 & 2023 audits and FIRs
 - MNP and KPMG working to prepare financial documents and audits
- Transfer money to reserves and NWMO dedicated funds
 - \$4M milestone payment received in December 2025
 - \$6.8M from Hosting Agreement in 2026
 - Requested \$10M NWMO Discretionary Benefit for infrastructure projects as a lump sum that can be invested to accrue value and build reserves
- Develop a comprehensive 2026 Budget & Quarterly Reports



3-Year Plan **FISCAL RECOVERY**

2027

- Complete 2024 & 2025 audits and FIRs
- Develop 2027 Budget & Quarterly Reports
- Apply for grant funding for capital projects and community initiatives
- Increase service fees and expand revenue sources (e.g. MAT tax)
- Review Asset Management Plan timelines and costs



3-Year Plan

FISCAL RECOVERY

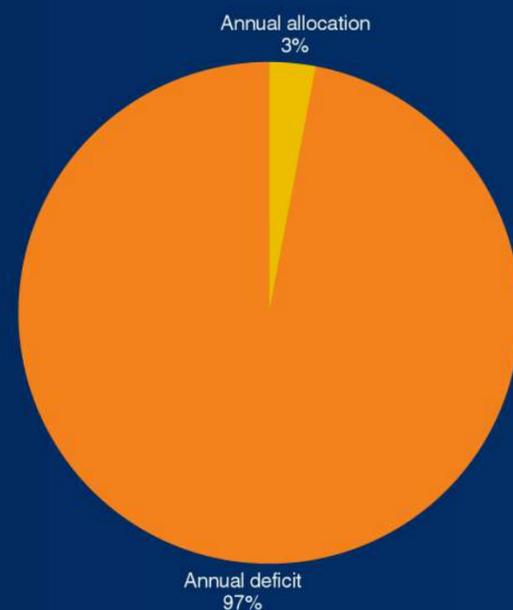
2028

- Complete 2026 & 2027 audits and FIRs - **ON TARGET!** 🎯
- Develop 2028 Budget & Quarterly Reports
- Address Asset Management Plan long-term projections
- Develop long-term financial plan and investment strategy
- Continue to improve the quality of life in Ignace, with responsible stewardship for future generations



STRATEGIC PLANNING & ASSET MANAGEMENT

AMP • Road repair • Water filtration & underground infrastructure • Wastewater treatment • Landfill usage
Facilities maintenance • Equipment maintenance & purchases • Asset divestment • Reserve investment



 Average annual reserve allocation = \$77,000

 AMP annual deficit = \$2,523,000
*How much **more** we should be setting aside for reserves each year!*

Hosting Agreement **NWMO FUNDING**

- Signed **Hosting Agreement** is posted on the Township of Ignace website
 - See Exhibit 1 - Detailed Financial Benefits table for a list of scheduled payments from 2024 to 2105
- **TOTAL = \$169,962,100 (2025 value) + \$10M Discretionary Benefit = >\$180M**
 - Amounts will be adjusted annually based on CPI inflation
 - The Township has requested lump-sum payment of the \$10M Discretionary Benefit for infrastructure projects, which will allow us to fund upgrades now and invest the rest in a permitted fund to strategically increase and build wealth for our required reserves (e.g. \$50M+ for future landfill closure and new site)
- **2026: ~\$6.8M (adjusted from \$6,707,736) + \$10M Discretionary Benefit (if NWMO agrees)**
- **2027: \$2.2M+**
- **2028: \$10.75M+**
 - Pending milestone for NWMO submission of Final Impact Statement and Licence to Prepare Site application to IAAC and CNSC

Community Benefits **COMMUNITY WELL BEING FUND**

- Funding for community non-profit organizations and Township projects in four streams:
 - Arts, Culture & Heritage
 - Sports & Recreation
 - Social & Health
 - Environmental & Other
- Total contributions into CWBF from NWMO since 2019 = \$1.8M
- Total grants & projects approved through CWBF ~ \$1.49M
 - Clerk/Treasurer is working on the list of all CWBF projects and grant recipients to be added to website
- **Amount remaining for grant consideration = \$310K**
- **Updated policy and application form online**
 - Submit applications to Clerk/Treasurer for consideration by Council

Since 2019

CWBF RECIPIENTS

- Ignace School
- Minor Hockey
- Healthy Community Working Group
- DAIRS
- Community Policing
- Nursery School
- Emmanuel Church
- Lions Club
- Silver Tops
- Fitness Club
- Ignace Otters Snowmobile Club
- Garbage truck and landfill compactor
- Fire department spreader & cutter
- Public Works equipment
- Mary Berglund Community Health Centre
- Christmas Cheer
- Ignace Public Library
- Quilting Club
- Royal Canadian Legion
- Ignace Youth Club
- Cornhole
- 2026 Ignace Safe Grad
- Golf course World Hub kitchen
- Upper Hall kitchen
- White Otter Days/Canada Day
- Winterfest
- Iggy mascot
- Arena repairs

Upcoming MUNICIPAL ELECTION



General Information

- Contact the Clerk for information about running for Council, including responsibilities and dates.



Nomination Period

- Opens May 1, 2026
- Closes August 21, 2026



Election Day

- Monday, October 26, 2026
- Online voting through Neuvote, same as 2022

Now's your chance to get involved!

SUBMITTED QUESTIONS

THANK YOU



QUESTION 1: *(All submitted by Lisa Ferrara)*

I am interested in updates for the following: Financial Reports and Statements, Annual Budgets, Final Budgets etc. Last update/post on the website is for 2021.

Please advise when we can expect to be caught up with finances so the Township can begin to apply for government funding (we've missed out on funding opportunities for the last few years) to help update our community infrastructure, including roads.

ANSWER:

2021 is the most recently completed year of Audited Financial Statements. We are working with MNP and KPMG to complete the 2022 and 2023 audits this year, and plan to be caught up within three years (or sooner if they can complete three audits next year).

We continue to apply and be approved for government funding, including almost \$1M for our arena and a \$4.8M grant for our wastewater treatment plant, and have requested that MMAH release our annual OMPF funding as we work to get up to date with our Financial Information Returns (FIRs).

Please review the Council meeting packages to see the approved budgets for each previous year and watch for the 2026 draft budget presentation in the coming weeks, as we secure grants and determine capital project expenditures for this year.

QUESTION 2:

Please update us about a town clean up of defaced and derelict buildings (494 Pine street apartment building, Trading Post, Texaco, empty plaza buildings, including Family Fare, empty trailers in trailer park...).

ANSWER:

- The apartment building at 494 Pine Street is privately owned and maintained.
- The Township recently gained ownership of the abandoned apartment building at 405 Pine Street and this property is available for sale.
- The Township does not own the former Trading Post / abandoned motel on Hwy. 17.
- The Township owns the abandoned Texaco / Taddeo Construction property along Hwy. 17 and this commercial property is in negotiations for sale.
- The Township recently regained ownership of the abandoned Family Fare unit in the Plaza and this commercial property is for sale.
- Other vacant units in the Plaza (e.g. Northern Store, Chinese restaurant, CIBC) are privately owned.
- We have applied for grant funding to fix up the floatplane so more people stop and shop in the Plaza.
- The Township owns numerous properties in the trailer park and these surplus properties are for sale.
- Some abandoned homes may be in the process of tax sale. Watch for notices!

QUESTION 3:

Please update us on where all funds received from NWMO have been spent to support, grow and beautify our town. Millions of dollars have been received over the years, however our town is in the worst shape it has ever been. I would be happy to hear how these funds have been used to beautify and improve our community. There has been no new economic growth that will help support and sustain Ignace. How are we addressing this potential?

ANSWER:

I hope we answered this earlier in the presentation. Since 2019, NWMO funds have been spent on community events, youth education and training, community wellbeing fund grants to various organizations, operating expenses, and to establish reserves for future infrastructure upgrades including water, roads and the landfill. We have purchased needed equipment to collect garbage, maintain our roads, and clean our sidewalks, established a Community Improvement Plan with numerous grant programs for businesses to spark economic development, repaired the Christmas lights, and are working to make Ignace a beautiful town to visit and live.

There is lots of economic development coming to Ignace and happening behind the scenes, but many of the plans are still confidential as developers secure funding for various projects and ventures. Stay tuned!

QUESTION 4:

Who maintains the digital sign at the back of the arena? It is outdated. It is not in a good location. I suggest the township parking lot where it can be monitored and viewed by the many tourists who stop in, as well as the general public as they visit the library and the municipal offices.

ANSWER:

There is a new digital sign on the front of the Rec Centre that was installed in 2024 and is maintained by the Township of Ignace. Our primary audience is citizens of Ignace, not tourists, and the sign is clearly visible from the post office and the Rec Centre parking lot, which are some of the busiest places in town. Local traffic is fairly low to the Town Office parking lot.

QUESTION 5:

Please explain why the NWMO hosting agreement did not receive input from residents. Why did Wabigoon get a payment for each of their residents and we did not explore this option as advised from NWMO a few years ago in the early stages of site selection? Can the hosting agreement be renegotiated? I was told it can.

ANSWER:

Residents of Ignace are represented by Township Council. Council, Administration and a legal team were involved in the negotiation and approval of the Hosting Agreement, and they did a great job to secure sustainable funding to support growth and economic development in Ignace for the next 100+ years. We have a legally binding agreement with NWMO.

If Ignace decides to apply to be the host community for the 2nd DGR for intermediate waste, we may have an opportunity to negotiate a separate agreement for that project.

It's important to understand that this agreement is not a lottery win for individuals; it is a long-term investment in a host community for a nation-building project on an international scale. This project creates opportunities for future generations to live and work in Ignace rather than taking a payout and moving away to larger centres.

Also, if anyone is interested in being directly involved with Township affairs, we encourage you to run for Council.

QUESTION 6:

Please share how you are preparing Ignace (in less than 3 yrs) for a multi-million dollar Centre of Expertise; 200 + NWMO families relocating to Ignace; as well as numerous contractors that will need places to stay, food, schooling and healthcare etc., and how Ignace will be able support both short term and long term needs during the development phases of building a Centre of Expertise and a Deep Geological Repository. It is noted that the Township has secured a building contractor from Thunder Bay that will build a new subdivision. How is this being paid for? Who will buy the properties or the COE if the NWMO project does not move ahead in Ignace.

ANSWER:

Much of this information has been discussed. New houses and accommodations will be built in Ignace by private developers, not by the Township, starting this year, and we are starting major infrastructure upgrade projects.

As for the agreement with Bruno's Contracting, it is important to clarify that the Township is selling vacant land to the developer for them to install roads and build homes, parks and neighbourhoods. The Township is not paying to build houses nor paying a fee to the developer.

As for who will buy the properties or the CoE if the NWMO project does not move ahead, that is out of the Township's control and a risk for the developers and NWMO, who are investing their money in new construction.

QUESTION 7:

Please share if someone is working on economic development strategies to attract new businesses to Ignace to help grow our tax base so we don't have to pay for some of the highest costs for water and taxes in a community of our size. What is the plan to keep this under control instead of raising this cost to the taxpayers?

ANSWER:

Currently, the CAO, Clerk/Treasurer, Outreach Lead, and Indigenous and Community Development Strategist are all actively involved in economic development, as we have many potential investors interested in building homes and businesses in Ignace. In addition, the Township has been awarded Rural Ontario Development program funding to add an Economic Development position, and we are in the process of applying to FedNor for additional funding for this initiative, so if anyone is interested in joining our team, please watch for the job ad.

As for water and tax rates, Ignace remains one of the most affordable communities in Northwestern Ontario because of our low property values, with a median MPAC assessed value of \$65K and a wide range of residential property values from \$3,800 to \$296K. 52% of homes pay less than \$5 a day in municipal taxes.

Continued...

Property Value & Municipal Tax Analysis

- 667 single-family residential properties requiring services (excludes vacant properties, those owned by the Township, and those missing data on MPAC)
 - Lowest MPAC value = \$3,800
 - Median MPAC value = \$65,000
 - Average MPAC value = \$74,838.23
 - Highest MPAC value = \$296,000
- 52% of residential properties pay less than \$5 a day in municipal taxes, which does not even cover the **more than \$6.44 cost per day per property*** for:
 - OPP police coverage = \$1.09
 - KDSB health services = \$0.35
 - Northern Waterworks = \$2.20
 - Fire protection = \$0.34
 - Public works = \$1.77
 - Recreation facilities = \$0.69
 - Plus administration, insurance, town buildings, etc.

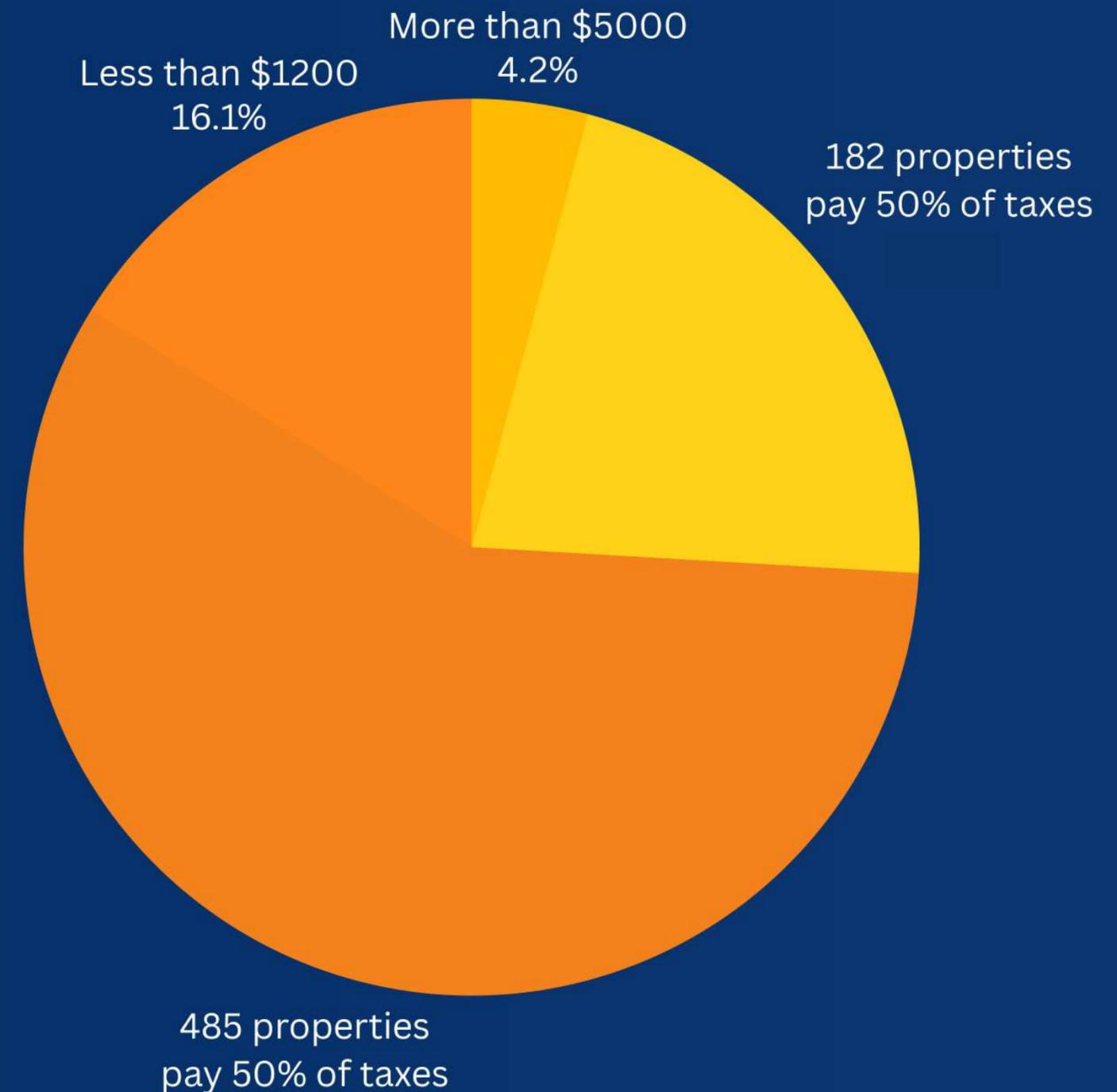


**Calculations based on 1,361 total properties including residential, multi-residential, commercial, industrial, pipeline, vacant land, and tax exempt (institutional, parks, etc.), using 2026 service rates if known and 2024 actual expenditures for departments*

Property Tax Distribution

- The lowest valued 485 properties (72.7%) pay half of the total taxes, while the highest valued 182 properties (27.3%) pay the other half – *for the same basic services*
- 135 residential properties pay less than \$1,200 per year in municipal taxes
- 35 residential properties pay over \$5,000 per year in municipal taxes

To put it in perspective



QUESTION 8:

Please share how our small Municipal staff (no economic officer, no planners, no engineers, no lawyers...) is going to get our community fiscally ready and property ready for the expected growth (the DGR project) and need of for increased services to be able to support the incoming families and workers when currently, there is so much work needed to get our township back in shape financially and structurally? How will you prepare Ignace for the future with or without the potential DGR?

ANSWER:

This Council hired a strong Chief Administrative Officer, who is supported by a solid team of employees and consultants. We work together to provide strategic recommendations to Council to prepare Ignace for the future and execute tasks to get things done. Yes, we handle many things, and sometimes there are delays, but we are skilled at setting priorities and driving the Township forward at the same time as our team works to get the Township caught up from previous years. Our office team is committed to:

- Transparency
- Professionalism
- Strategic recommendations
- Growth and development.

Continued...

The Township of Ignace Team

- Mayor Kim Baigrie and Councillors Jodie Defeo, Janet Lett, Wayne Minnear, and John Taddeo
- Aaron Gullins, CAO - Professional Engineer with an MBA and a background in civil construction project management
- Lesley Sterling, Clerk/Treasurer - Degrees in science and public relations, experience in administration and community economic development, registered Realtor who understands land sales and property issues
- Keith Roseborough, Indigenous and Community Development Strategist - Oversees planning, engagement, Indigenous relations and reconciliation, and in-office IT support
- Jake Pastore, Outreach and Communications Lead - Development outreach and government and media relations
- Dwayne Densmore, Public Works Manager, with a team of public works and arena employees
- Supported by deputy clerk, deputy treasurer, tax clerk, accounts clerk, office coordinator, and rec programmer
- Looking to add a Project Lead, a Chief Building Inspector / By-law officer, and an economic development position.
- IT services through Atwood Consulting
- Building inspection services through RSM Building Consultants
- MNP and KPMG working to get us caught up with audits and financial statements
- Hardy Stevenson & Associates, a team of subject matter experts, assisting with the DGR project regulatory process
- Legal counsel through Cheadles, Templeman, and Judson Howie, depending on the issue (e.g. DGR, hosting agreement, contracts, real estate, tax sales, HR, etc.)
- Principles Integrity retained as Integrity Commissioner

QUESTION 9:

Please share, going forward how the Township will keep the public informed and up to date on a REGULAR basis regarding all township business? How will you reach everyone?

ANSWER:

For the past several months, the Clerk has been issuing Facebook updates following each regular Council meeting, and these are printed and posted in the community along with numerous posters and public notices advertising events, activities, land sales, volunteer opportunities, etc. We have also started printing a newsletter, which is available online and at several locations around town, posted at the post office, and available at the Town Office for anyone who wants a copy.

All Council agendas, meeting packages, minutes, and by-laws are available online at www.ignace.ca, and you can register for notifications when new items are posted.

A website update is being proposed for 2026 to update all information online and increase security.

All residents are invited to attend Council meetings in person or via Zoom and review the meeting packages, minutes, and information at www.ignace.ca. Our recent open meeting recordings will be posted to YouTube within two weeks.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS?

UNTIL 8:25 PM

- Line up at the mic or raise your hand and we'll bring the mic to you.
- Please state your name and ask ONE question, limited to one minute.
- If you have more questions, please return to the end of the line to give everyone a chance to speak.
- If you would prefer to write a question, you may hand it to the Clerk.
- We can only answer questions related to municipal governance and operations.
- If Council or staff cannot answer a question tonight, we will follow up.

