



SMOOTH
ROCK FALLS

*Near north, near perfect.
Presque nord, presque parfaite.*

Smooth Rock Falls flourishing four years after offering \$500 lots to attract businesses and residents

Property prices up 144 per cent, 60 new families in Town

SMOOTH ROCK FALLS, Ont. (October 14, 2021) – Smooth Rock Falls, a progressive community of 1,300 in northern Ontario that generated nationwide attention in 2017 for offering bold financial incentives, including \$500 serviced lots, to reverse its declining population is experiencing a resurgence. During the last four years, 60 new families have moved to the town and the average property value has increased 144 per cent.

“When we launched our marketing campaign to attract people to Smooth Rock Falls in 2017, houses were languishing on the market for months and months. Some had stood empty for so long they had to be bulldozed as they were uninhabitable” says Sue Perras, Mayor, Smooth Rock Falls “Today, private houses are selling within days and many are being purchased sight unseen. It’s quite a turnaround.”

In 2017, the average property in Smooth Rock Falls was listed for \$56,065. This year the average property listing is \$137,000, and properties are typically selling for 95 per cent of their asking price. Some properties are setting records. The Moose Motel in Smooth Rock Falls sold for \$325,000 in 2017; in 2020, it sold for \$975,000.

Calling itself Near North, Near Perfect, Smooth Rock Falls is a safe, friendly, bilingual community that is home to a state-of-the-art hospital, library, numerous churches, French and English schools and excellent all-season outdoor recreation. Families from southern Ontario looking for affordable housing, are choosing to settle in Smooth Rock Falls as they see the town as an ideal place to live. At the same time, families from northern Ontario along with former residents are purchasing property and moving to town as they like the small community feel combined with the amenities of a larger community.

“For many years after the Tembec Mill, the town’s main employer, closed the feeling in town was very glum. Businesses closed, long-time residents moved away and those who stayed thought Smooth Rock Falls may disappear completely,” says Luc Denault, Chief Administrative Officer, Smooth Rock Falls. “Today the mood is very different. People see a future for themselves and their families. They are also enjoying the products and services of all the businesses that have opened in the last few years including fresh produce from our new vegetable farm and greenhouses, IT support from a technology services business, and eating at our new bistro and pizzeria.

Despite Smooth Rock Falls’ recent success, Town Council is not resting on its laurels; it continues to pursue new opportunities and explore ways to diversify its economy. Today, it opened The Near North Industrial Centre, a 9.57-hectare industrial park with 12 turn-key lots. The anchor tenant, a diesel maintenance and repair outfit, is already in place but the remaining lots are available with a range of

incentives, including a potential rebate of up to 90 per cent of the purchase price, tax grants, and more. This fall, Smooth Rock Falls will also be initiating a waterfront master study to explore ways to unlock 140 acres of waterfront land in town.

“Being creative and taking risks has resulted in in increased commercial confidence in Smooth Rock Falls,” says Denault. “We’re planning to continue to come up with innovative ways to ensure Smooth Rock Falls continues to grow for years to come.”

- 30 -

MEDIA CONTACT:

To schedule an interview or receive images, contact:

Katherine Clark
Beacon Strategic Communications
katherine@beaconcommunications.ca
(416) 453-3288