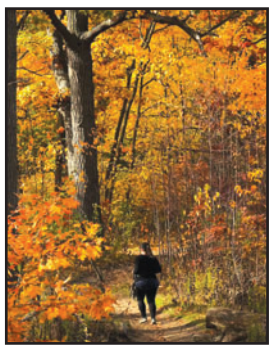




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# The Chronicle Journal

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THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO \$1.65

## Mayor eyes extra powers for funding

BY JODI LUNDMARK  
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Thunder Bay's mayor says having the strong mayor powers enacted is a means of accessing millions of dollars in housing funding.

On Monday, Ken Boshcoff will ask council for its support to write to Ontario's minister of

municipal affairs and housing to have the powers enacted and confirm Thunder Bay's housing target of 2,200 new homes by 2031. The target was given by the province without consultation with the city.

A report, authored by city clerk Krista Power, outlining potential changes to the Corpora-

tion of the City of Thunder Bay, will also be presented to council on Monday.

Some of the powers granted to the mayor through the strong mayor initiative include: appoint, dismiss and assign other duties to the city manager; determine the organization structure of the city, hire or dismiss the

head of any other part of the organizational structure of the city; appoint chairs and vice-chairs of local boards; require council to consider any matter that could advance a provincial priority; veto a bylaw that could interfere with a provincial priority; and propose, prepare and adopt the annual budget.

Boshcoff doesn't need council's support to send the letter to the minister but on Wednesday, he said he would appreciate their endorsement.

"If I didn't think it was necessary, I wouldn't bring it forward in the first place," he said.

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## Ontario pork market 'quite strong'

Pork farmer's clients prefer local amid big-box deals

BY CARL CLUTCHEY  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER  
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

There's nothing like bacon for breakfast, and the slightly salty treat has been a steal of a deal lately in some big-chain grocery stores.

In the last few weeks, sharp-eyed shoppers have picked up a pack of a dozen or so strips for less than \$5, nearly half the price of what they might have forked out earlier this year.

Though South Gillies pork producer Rob Groenheide says he's not immediately affected by bargain prices in big stores, the amounts being charged are a bit concerning.

"It could affect me down the road, we'll just have to see what (prices) are like in a few months," Groenheide, who has been raising about 30 head of pigs on a 60-acre farm for the past 10 years, said Wednesday.

Groenheide's pork, which sells for about \$12 per pound, is sold at the farm gate or at local venues like the Country Market at Thunder Bay's CLE.

Pork farming is not widespread in rural Thunder Bay, but a few remain committed to supplying a demand.

"Most of my customers are looking for a locally produced product," Groenheide said.

Though store prices for pork appear to have entered an unpredictable phase, Groenheide says one thing is certain: his input costs, animal feed in particular, have been steadily rising.

"It costs \$800 right now for a tonne of feed," he said.

Before pigs are sent to be slaughtered for market, the animals usually must reach a weight of 250-300 pounds over a period of six to eight months.

Most of Canada's commercial-scale pork is produced in

"Most of my customers are looking for a locally produced product."

Rob Groenheide  
Pork producer

Quebec and exported to Asia.

Last month, it was reported that that province's industry was undergoing a major shakeup in the wake of the announced closure of the Olymel pork processing plant in Vallée-Jonction, near Quebec City.

The loss of a major processor is expected to create a glut of supply and drive prices down in Quebec; to try and avoid a collapse, the Quebec government is providing financial incentives to encourage some farmers to leave the pork business, according to local media reports.

According to Ontario Pork, the southern Ontario agency that represents about 1,000 pork producers in this province, the industry is fairly healthy by contrast.

While a shortage of processing facilities is also an issue in Ontario, the Ontario pork market "is quite strong," an agency marketing spokesman said.

Bargain bacon prices in big-box stores are more likely rooted in large grocery outlets trying to attract customers with cheap deals, rather than a reflection of the state of the Ontario pork industry, the agency spokesman said.

Groenheide said if pork farming is no longer economically viable, he would still raise animals on the family farm for their own consumption.

## 'Best-kept secret around' welcomes business, tourism

BY SANDI KRASOWSKI  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER  
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL



PHOTOS BY THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL/SANDI KRASOWSKI  
Beverly Barlow demonstrates wool-making to a tour group on Tuesday, at Borderlands Sheep Farm, which she operates with her family.

Nestled by the Nor'Wester Mountain escarpments with Lake Superior at its doorstep, the Municipality of Neebing is home to scenic hiking, geocaching, boating, snowmobiling, fishing, hunting, shopping and dining.

Since 2019, the Neebing municipality has seen nine-per cent population growth, impacting the growth of businesses.

Brian Kurikka, a Neebing councillor, accompanied a group on a tour of area businesses on Tuesday, and called the municipality the "best-kept secret around."

"People just shoot down Highway 61 to Minnesota and don't even realize there's a municipality of 874 square kilometres — which Thunder Bay is under 400 square kilometres," he said. "It consists of five townships, there's no downtown core and Highway 61 is our main street."

Kurikka says the unique thing about the business community is most businesses are home-based. From crafters and artisans to farms, bakeries and cafes, the business community is bustling while tucked away off the main highway.

"We belong to Superior Country Tourism and the Lake Superior Circle Tour promotion, so we see lots of people coming here from Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin, driving through, and we'd like to see them stay," he said.

"We are trying to create some awareness of the many businesses here and we have requests for expressions of interest for tourism-based businesses. Our economic development officer, Eve, will assist with any businesses wanting to set up here."

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Marcel Tardif, an artisan, displays his hand-crafted bowls at the Municipality of Neebing municipal office on Tuesday, during a tour of the area businesses.

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### WEATHER



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MAROZZA SUBARU



Complete weather info on page A2  
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