

# Blue Sky News

Blue Sky Economic Growth Corporation

Volume 1, Issue 1  
May 1, 2003

## Beautiful Blue Sky

Welcome to the first edition of the Blue Sky News. This is a monthly publication from Blue Sky Economic Growth Corporation to keep you informed about our activities.

Within this publication, you will find information on BSEGC and its sectors, current economic initiatives, profiles on some important people in the Blue Sky Region and hopefully some fun stuff too!

In this issue, we will catch you up on the goings-on within BSEGC since its incorporation in October of 2002., introduce you to the "sectoral clusters approach" of economic development that Blue Sky employs, information on the region's "big ten" economic sectors and some insight into our objectives.

With space restraints, we obviously can't tell you everything we've been doing! There's just too much! We can however point you to other resources in the Blue Sky Region to find some answers to your questions. A good start would be our new Web site launched Apr. 22, 2003.

[www.blueskyegc.ca](http://www.blueskyegc.ca) contains volumes of information about the "inner workings" of BSEGC and its Board of Directors. Also, posted on the site are our Bylaws and other corporate documents as well as up to date minutes of our monthly meetings. There is even a monthly survey to get your feedback about the site and your views on the Blue Sky

## Vision

The Blue Sky Region is home to well in excess of 100,000 people living in a area which is 160 km east to west from West Nipissing to Mattawa and 320 kms north to south from Temagami to Novar.

Blue Sky Economic Growth Corporation is intended to mobilize key elements of the private and public sectors to implement economic development strategies with a shared vision in order to ensure the prosperity of the Region in the new millennium.

The Blue Sky initiative is built on the basic premise that the overall economic attributes of the Region

economy in general.

Most importantly, the site contains many links to external sites with tones of information on the Region. From links to small municipalities, to the largest database of organizations in the Region, The Blue Sky Portal, you can find it all at [blueskyegc.ca](http://blueskyegc.ca)!



Blue Sky Economic Growth Corporation would like to thank its partners and sponsors: FedNor, HRDC, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, NECO, North Bay EDC, Mattawa and Area Forestry Committee for Economic Development, Economic Partners-Sudbury East/West Nipissing, and Economic Partners-South Temiskaming

embody significant strengths that cannot be realized by individual communities, groups or companies working alone. The hallmarks of the sectoral clusters approach to economic development are cooperation, coordination, collaboration and constant communication.

**Please see Sectoral Clusters Approach/P2**

In partnership with:



### Inside this issue:

*Connecting The Blue Sky Region* 2

*The "Sectoral Clusters Approach"* 2

*Social Growth And The Economy* 2

*"Selling" Blue Sky* 3

*Who's Building For Our Future?* 3

*The Importance of the Economic Impact study* 3

*Interview With Susan Church* 4

[Click here](#) for relevant news articles

### Did you know?....

- The Blue Sky Region is approximately 160 kms wide and 320 kms long!
- Forestry is the largest industry in the Region employing 4,500 people.
- The Region has a primarily "service based economy," with the service sector accounting for 87% of total employment.
- Approximately 50% of population of the Region resides in North Bay (52,771)

## Connecting The Blue Sky Region

The Technology and Telecommunications Sector is very active within the Region. Among the most ambitious initiatives undertaken by any sector is the "BRAND and COBRA" initiative spearheaded by members of the Technology and Telecommunications Sector.

20 areas throughout The Region.

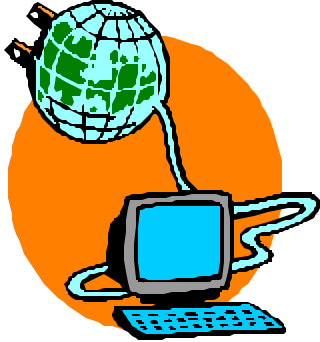
This will be a major project; "In terms of funding there is the potential of receiving \$7.5 million dollars for implementation of the provincial COBRA program alone" continues Bourn-Tyson.

The over-arching goal of these two initiatives is to bring a minimum of 1.5 mbs connectivity to over 80% of the population of the Blue Sky Region.

Another ongoing project by the Technology and Telecommunications Sector that has met with great success is the Blue Sky Portal. The Portal is a directory of over 8,000 businesses and organizations in the Region. Go to [www.blueskyregion.ca](http://www.blueskyregion.ca) to find out more.

"Thanks to these two projects, soon there will be better broadband capability- high-speed internet access throughout the entire Blue Sky Region" says Donna Bourn-Tyson, Secretary/Treasurer of Blue Sky Net.

Blue Sky Net, the regional, community based network for the Blue Sky Region is leading the charge. It is a subsidiary of the Blue Sky Region Community Network, an incorporated, not for profit network of Community Access Program (CAP) sites located in



COBRA and BRAND: Bringing high-speed internet to Blue Sky

"In terms of funding there is the potential of receiving \$7.5 million dollars for implementation of the provincial COBRA program alone"

## The "Sectoral Clusters Approach"

### Continued from P1

Blue Sky EGC uses the "sectoral clusters approach" to economic development. This strategy promotes cooperation of sectors/businesses that may never have had the opportunity to collaborate in the past.

A cluster is defined as "geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field." Clusters rarely conform to conventional industrial classifications and boundaries. These traditional categorizations often fail to encompass many of the important people and relationships within the cluster which often extend vertically

(industrial relationships like suppliers of specialized equipment, components, services and infrastructure) and horizontally (service based relationships such as education, training, financing, housing, etc).

In the Blue Sky Region 10 active clusters have been identified. The "vertical" clusters are: Building and Retirement Development, Agriculture, Forestry, Mining, Retail, Tourism, Transportation, and Technology and Telecommunications, The "horizontal" or support clusters are: Quality of Life and Education and Training.

## Social Growth Is Economic Growth

The Quality of Life (QoL) Sector is one of two horizontal or support sectors in The Blue Sky Region. The QoL committee is headed by Chair Lynn Ann Lauriault of the North Bay Social Planning Council. Collectively, this Sector has created a clearly defined vision statement:

"The Blue Sky Region has an excellent quality of life that supports economic prosperity, human progress and an overall healthy community."

Currently, the QoL Sector of the Blue Sky Region has dedicated itself to devising and developing quality of life measurements for the Region. Also, the

committee sees it as essential to provide this information to those promoting quality of life in the Region and to analyze and monitor existing or emergent quality of life issues.

The Quality of Life Sector recognizes that a healthy and happy citizenry can only help strengthen the Region's economy.



A strong community = a strong economy



## “Selling” Blue Sky

The Tourism Sector of the Blue Sky Region, led by the Almaguin-Nipissing Travel Association, tirelessly promotes the Region at trade and cottage shows, through media advertisement and by a host of other initiatives. However, the Tourism Sector has made a unique partnership to double Blue Sky advertising power.

Not only has the Retail Sector been involved in a number of initiatives for the benefit of retailers, but has also emerged as one of the lead marketers of the Region. Some of the current Retail initiatives include signage campaigns to increase awareness of the Region and a co-operative advertising project to promote Blue Sky outside of the Region.

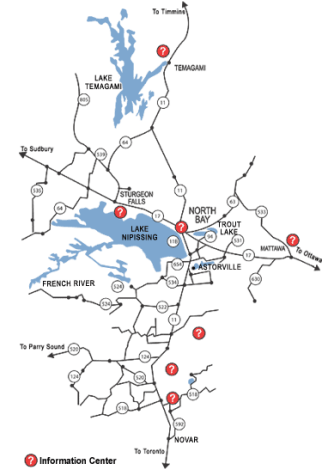
A Christmas promotional newspaper insert was produced by the members of the Retail Committee to multiply their advertising effectiveness. The in-

sert was distributed to approximately 100,000 homes throughout Ontario, and proved to be very successful.

Bob Rowlandson, Chairman of the Sturgeon Falls Special Events Committee attested to the benefits of inclusion in the newspaper insert. “The Parade of Lights saw its largest visitor-ship ever from the Sudbury area...” The insert was the only form of out-of-region advertising the parade used.

The Retail Sector also produced the majority of the signage for the Blue Sky Region; which includes the Blue Sky Region boundary, municipality identification and Retail Directory Signs.

Overall it has been a very productive year in marketing the Region thanks to the efforts of these two Sectors.



The Blue Sky Region

Source: [www.visitblueskyregion.com](http://www.visitblueskyregion.com)

## Building For The Future

In most western countries, population bases are aging due to the "bubble" created by baby boomers. The Blue Sky Region is preparing for this through the efforts of the Building and Retirement Development Sector.

This sector asserts that the first step towards action is to educate the public and government leaders in order to improve everyone's ability to cope with an aging population. It is proposed that the first step in educating the public is to hold a formal information session or "forum" on the issues at hand.

Roger Acton, Chair of the Building and Retirement

Development Sector believes that this information sharing session between government leaders and health care personnel, administrators of long-term care facilities and other concerned individuals "will crystallize a national phenomena right here in The Blue Sky Region".

Not only has the Retail Sector been involved in a number of initiatives for the benefit of retailers, but has also emerged as one of the lead marketers of the Region

## Economic Impact Studies: Important Tools

Three vertical clusters have recently produced economic impact studies (EIS). The Agriculture, Forestry, and Mining Sectors have all produced documents that outline the economic attributes of their respective industries.

These studies provide valuable information to not only people involved in industry, but also the general public. Economic impact studies provide historical data about the industry. This can be used to plot trends that will help predict future directions. Perhaps most importantly, an EIS illustrates what is hap-

pening currently in an industry.

These EIS can be found at:

Agriculture:  
[www.blueskyegc.ca/agriculturelinks.htm](http://www.blueskyegc.ca/agriculturelinks.htm)

Forestry:  
[www.blueskyegc.ca/forestrylinks.htm](http://www.blueskyegc.ca/forestrylinks.htm)

Mining:  
[www.blueskyegc.ca/mininglinks.htm](http://www.blueskyegc.ca/mininglinks.htm)



The Forestry Sector is the largest in the Blue Sky Region.



## Blue Sky Economic Growth Corporation

Blue Sky Economic Growth Corporation  
Suite 350, 222 McIntyre Street West  
North Bay, ON - P1B 2Y8

(705/888) 476-8822  
Fax: (705) 495-6038  
jeff.buell@blueskyregion.ca

Mobilizing the region with a shared  
economic vision



**Blue Sky News Inc.**  
A division of Blue Sky EGC  
Jeff Buell, Editor in Chief

We're on the Web!  
[www.blueskyegc.ca](http://www.blueskyegc.ca)

## We Need Your Help!!

Do you have a camera? Do you think you have a knack for taking great pictures? Well, we want to see them!

We want to add more pictures to our Web site that depicts economic life in the Blue Sky Region. Get out and snap those pictures of our economy in action. Blue Sky EGC wants pictures of people planting trees, shopping, fishing, manufacturing products, you name it and be creative! Please keep in mind our "big ten" sectors while taking your pictures.

Send your submissions to:  
Blue Sky Economic Growth Corporation  
Suite 350, 222 McIntyre Street West  
North Bay, ON - P1B 2Y8

Or email digital pictures to:  
jeff.buell@blueskyregion.ca

We will make every effort to include all appropriate submissions on [www.blueskyegc.ca](http://www.blueskyegc.ca). Please make sure you provide contact information with your submissions so we can tell you when or where your pictures are posted.

\* By submitting photos, Blue Sky EGC reserves the right to publishing.

## Interview With Susan Church

Susan Church accepted the position of General Manager of Blue Sky Economic Growth Corporation in late December of 2002, two short months after its incorporation.

"I observed opportunities for the Region to work together as a whole, I saw that we weren't there yet and I thought that BSEGC was the vehicle that could do this" said Susan when asked about what excited her about the position.

In the first year Susan feels that public relations and outreach is vital to the success of BSEGC. "We need to make people aware of what our purpose is, what we can do for communities, industries and business."

Susan also thinks that it is important for the corporation to make themselves available, to the region. "We must go to them, it is not good enough to say that we can help, we need to be proactive."

With any fledgling corporation, there are some problems and setbacks. "Blue Sky Economic Growth Corporation is a regional initiative, communities have to understand that. They (communities) have to start knitting themselves together, if they don't we can't succeed."

"But this will come as soon as we prove the benefits of regional participation." Susan said about how she intends to solve this problem.

Part of BSEGC's mandate is to facilitate the creation of 5,000 new jobs in the Region over the next ten years; a very lofty goal. "I believe it is doable." Susan said. "Its also about maintaining the jobs the Region already has."

"We can do it if we seize every opportunity to explore possibilities. It is essential that we investigate these opportunities with an open mind."



Susan Church, General Manager,  
BSEGC