



The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

Staff Report

Report Title: November 2022 Manager of Strategic Initiatives Status Update

Prepared By: Michelle Goetz

Department: BED

Date: Nov. 7, 2022

Report Number: BED-2022-11-51

File Number:

C11 BED 22

Attachments:

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information report number BED-2022-11-51, prepared by Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives.

Background:

This report provides an update from the Manager of Strategic Initiatives.

Discussion:

[Water and Wastewater Servicing Master Plan](#)

Work continues with BM Ross on the Water and Wastewater Servicing Master Plan (also known as the Growth and Servicing Master Plan). We are hosting an open house on November 16th from 6-8PM at the Ripley-Huron Community Centre in the Social Room to provide more information to the public about the progress of the project. We expect the final report by the end of the year.

[Women in Carpentry 2.0](#)

Intake 2 of the Women in Carpentry Program started on November 1st, we have 9 participants attending this session (20 total for this round of SDF funding). Intake 1 just completed building a shed that was donated to the community services department. The shed will be used by the Summer Sports Committee for their equipment. The shed is located beside the playground, behind the pavilion at Memorial Park in Ripley.

Intake 1 participants are beginning their work placements in November and we look forward to continuing to see the participants develop their skills over the next 8-10 weeks.

We have met with our partners for the program, Fanshawe College and the UBC Local 2222 Carpenter's Union, and there is continued support for the program. We will be applying for SDF Round 3 funding, applications are due by the end of January. We hope to hear if we are successful in receiving additional funding before the end of March when our Project Coordinator's contract is complete. The Township would not be able to provide this program without SDF funding, our partners and Kristin, our Project Coordinator. The Township is not required to provide any financial contribution to this program.

Engagement Framework Roll-out Plan

The engagement framework development team will be re-assembling to ensure a smooth roll-out of our new framework and tool-kit. The team met on November 4th to develop Phase 1 of the implementation plan and to develop KPI's to measure the success of implementation. We look forward to updating Council as work continues.

As a Communitech member, we were asked to present our lessons learned and path forward for citizen engagement with their members. We provided a webinar with approximately 15 attendees on October 25th. The feedback from the session was very positive, the attendees appreciated our honesty and actionable items they could implement right away. We have been asked to participate as a panelist in an upcoming webinar series through City Age, Future of Cities: Connecting Canadian Municipalities with Canadian Innovation on November 22nd, I will be attending to speak to citizen engagement.

Digital Modernization

The Team is continuing to work on our digital transformation road map with implementation of Booking our new facility calendar software for Community Services, City Reporter our new inspection software for Community Services and Bambora to add ecommerce capabilities to our website. We are actively working on the next phase of software recommendations through the roadmap presented to us by GHD which includes reviewing the need for budgeting software, additional inspection capabilities for public works and human resources tools.

Electric Vehicle Chargers

The Director of Community Services, the Director of Public Works and I began exploring funding opportunities for electric vehicle chargers. Electric vehicle chargers were noted in our strategic plan action plan as something Council and the Team would like to explore by 2023. Our initial research indicates that a Level 3 charging station would be great as it is a "fast-charging" station but level 3 stations are considerably more expensive and can require additional infrastructure. We are also trying to determine what is the best option to encourage visitors to stay and spend

time in our downtowns, a level 2 charger could take 2 hours to fill up most vehicles, providing ample time to explore our downtown stores and restaurants. Through our initial conversations, we think Lucknow and Ripley would be ideal locations for EV charging stations as we could find locations with adequate parking and they have larger commercial areas to explore. Westario Power provides some funding in partnership with Bruce Power, to support the installation of level 2 chargers and we are exploring additional funding sources. We will bring forward any information we find for Council to review before budget deliberations.

Community Improvement Plan

Bruce County has updated their Spruce the Bruce program, as was reported earlier this year, to include additional funding programs for businesses. In order for our businesses to be eligible for the new funding programs, we have to update our Community Improvement Plan. Currently the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) identifies our community improvement plan areas in Ripley, Lucknow and Point Clark, and describes the funding programs that we can offer through the Downtown Improvement Program and Spruce the Bruce.

In order to update our CIP to ensure our businesses are eligible for the new Spruce the Bruce Programs we need an amendment to our plan and by-law that includes the descriptions of the new programs. Bruce County is also requesting that we create a Municipal-wide Community Improvement Plan area that would encompass all businesses in Huron-Kinloss. We can create this additional CIP area that can only access the Spruce the Bruce funding programs (not our Downtown Improvement Program), which would encourage agri-tourism, product development and other business opportunities outside of our downtown commercial areas. If we were to explore this option, we would be required to schedule an open house to discuss the changes with the public and then provide updated mapping and program descriptions to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The County has provided templates and wording that can be used to update our CIP if we choose to do so. They are also holding \$15,600 for Huron-Kinloss businesses for 2022-2023 in Spruce the Bruce funds, to allow us time to update our CIP so our businesses can access the additional funds (above the regular Spruce the Bruce funding).

Staff will be reviewing the new programs, the requirements to update our CIP and potential impacts to our Downtown Improvement Program and budget. We will bring forward our recommendation to Council in the new year.

Rural Talks 2 Rural Conference Re-cap

I attended the Rural talks 2 Rural conference in Brussels Ontario from October 17th – 19th. The conference focused on three key areas of rural living: well-being, housing and climate change. Day 1, Well-being, was all about rural healthcare and examined some amazing programs happening throughout North America. Day 2, Housing, provided an opportunity for the delegates to brainstorm solutions and big ideas to solve our housing crisis and also had guest speakers from all over Canada discussing

their initiatives. Day 3, Climate change, was another thought-provoking day that again included presentations from speakers from all over Canada. It was inspiring to learn what is possible when a group of like-minded individuals come together to solve community problems. I highly recommend this conference as it talks about real rural problems and solutions that could actually work in rural areas.

Discovery Guide

Another year has gone by and work will begin in November for our annual Discovery Guide. We will be creating the guide in-house again this year and aiming for an April 2023 completion date. We do not anticipate requiring pre-budget approval for this project (as we have in previous years) because we are completing the design portion in house.

Other Initiatives and Projects

The Economic Development Team is finishing up a number of other projects included in our business plan this year including:

- Point Clark Lighthouse Museum Revitalization Project
- Secrets of the Back 40 Tourism Strategy Implementation
- Tourism Kiosks and Pedestrian Signs
- Sprout – Youth entrepreneurship Program
- Business Networking Events
- Ripley Industrial Park – Ontario Certified Site
- Business Recruitment and Welcoming Packages

Throughout the year, we've explored different options and ideas for resident attraction initiatives and business recruitment initiatives and need to put some additional time and resources into developing a clear action plan around these subjects. With the changing landscape of our downtowns, the housing market, and a possible recession, we've realized the need to better define our priorities and ensure our resources are used most appropriately. We will be spending time over the next few months reviewing our economic development action plan and reaching out to our community partners to better understand how we can support businesses and residents in Huron-Kinloss. This information will be essential in developing our 2023 business plan and budget.

Financial Impacts:

None at this time.

Strategic Alignment / Link:

The information provided in this report is consistent with and in keeping with the Municipality's Vision & Mission. The recommendations contribute to the goals in achieving a prosperous, spirited, vibrant and accessible community.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives

Report Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer