



Staff Report

Report Title: 2024 March Economic Development Officer Status Update

Prepared By: Amy Irwin

Department: BED

Date: Mar. 4, 2024

Report Number: BED-2024-03-7

File Number: C11 BED 24

Attachments: Economic Development Brand

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report BED-2024-03-7 as prepared by Amy Irwin, Economic Development Officer.

Background:

This report provides the Committee with an update from the Economic Development Officer.

Discussion:

Economic Development

The Economic Development team continues to support local businesses by:

- Regular check-ins and communication with local businesses.
- Staff attended the Economic Developers Council of Ontario Conference in Toronto from February 6-9. Key takeaways include how to position your community to investors by identifying competitive advantages and telling your community's story; the importance of sector development and creating cluster businesses development opportunities; and utilizing peer driven marketing to your advantage.
- Welcome week social media posts on Do Business in Huron-Kinloss, highlighting recently opened businesses in our community.
- Do Business in Huron-Kinloss and Huron-Kinloss Tourism Facebook pages will be merging into one page in the coming month – "Discover Huron-Kinloss" to eliminate the need to run two pages and promote businesses and tourism on one page.

- The 2024 Discovery Guide is almost complete and will be printed the last week of March, delivered the second week of April.
- New economic development branding is complete (attached) and will be used for business recruitment pitch kits, promotional material, and social media posts.
- Presented grant opportunities at a grant presentation night on Feb. 20, hosted by the Ripley Business Community meeting. Approximately 20 people were in attendance.
- Supported Point Clark business, Her Strength Studio at their grand opening at their new location at the Point Clark Community Centre on Feb. 24.
- Planning a community engagement session on March 26 at Ripley Huron Community Centre to discuss Downtown Ripley Revitalization. Marketing of open house and communication will commence March 5. This is a brainstorming session to begin to assess the community's vision for downtown Ripley and determine a plan of action for enhancing downtown Ripley.
- Support provided to Town of Minto's Homegrown event, hosted at Grassroots in Huron-Kinloss.
- Updates to CIP presented to Downtown Improvement Committee.

Tourism

- Back Forty Bazaar – Staff are hoping to host vendor markets in the park, on a rotating basis this summer. Every Thursday from 3-7 pm, starting June 20 in Lewis Park in Ripley and alternating with Caledonia Park in Lucknow. Promotion for vendors will begin March 5. All vendors will be required to provide a Certificate of Insurance and register with Grey Bruce Public Health, if required.
- Brand Ambassador program research for Secrets of the Back Forty tourism season.
- Attendance at Lucknow's Music in the Fields meetings

Key Indicators of success

- Huron-Kinloss business feel supported and celebrated in our community.
- Ongoing business investment and retention in our community.
- Huron-Kinloss is promoted as a destination to visit, live, and invest.

Financial Impacts:

Included in the current budget.

Strategic Alignment / Link:

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

Respectfully Submitted By:

Amy Irwin, Economic Development Officer

Report Approved By: Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer