



The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

Staff Report

Report Title: Economic Development Update July 2024

Date: Jul. 3, 2024

Report Number: BED-2024-07-13

Department: BED

File Number: C11 BED 24

Prepared By: Michelle Goetz and Amy Irwin

Attachments:

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report BED-2024-07-13, prepared by Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Amy Irwin, Economic Development Officer.

Background:

This report provides an update from the Economic Development Team.

Discussion/Analysis/Overview:

Ripley Downtown Revitalization Project

Following the community workshop in March, the Team has been busy working behind the scenes on the Ripley Revitalization Project. The current state analysis by Pl.ural is complete and through that a list of actions has been created. The Ripley Downtown Revitalization project is a multi-year project that aims to breathe new life in the once vibrant downtown core.

Actions to be completed this year include:

- Design Renderings of the Downtown
- Window Boxes
- Window Clings
- Investment Attraction
- Events – workshops and promotions
- Photography and videography

Signage

The Lucknow and Ripley gateway sign lighting has been replaced and is operational. The Wayfinding signs in Downtown Ripley have the old Ripley headers on them, they are being replaced with new headers with the Ripley logo. A new tourism kiosk is being installed on the picnic shelter at the Point Clark Community Centre. The kiosk will look the same as the four other kiosks in the Township and will include a locked bulletin board and brochure holders.

The gateway sign project came in over budget because a vacuum truck was required to dig the holes for the battery boxes. The other projects are being funded through the Promotional Material and Tourism budgets.

Community Organization Registry and Volunteer Webpage

Through conversations with residents and community groups, the Team realized that one of the best ways for new residents to meet people in the community is to volunteer! However, finding volunteer opportunities can be challenging, especially for new residents who don't know where to look for them.

A webpage was created to provide an area for community organizations to post volunteer opportunities and for residents to search for opportunities. The webpage can be found on the corporate website under Live Here, Volunteer. Community organizations complete a simple form with information about their opportunity and staff will review it and post it to the website.

To ensure the opportunities are legitimate, organizations must be included in our Community Organization Registry. To be included they must operate in Huron-Kinloss or benefit the residents of Huron-Kinloss. The Registry will also help staff keep our community organization contact list up to date.

To be added to the Registry, community organizations can complete the form on the Community Organization Listing webpage or the Volunteer webpage. Staff will review the submission for eligibility and update our records.

Volunteer webpage: <https://www.huronkinloss.com/live-here/volunteer/>

Community Organization Registry: <https://www.huronkinloss.com/live-here/community-organizations/>

Tourism updates

The Point Clark Lighthouse opened for the season on Friday, June 28 with a full complement of 5 staff. The Lighthouse and Museum will be open daily from 10:30-5 until September 2.

Back Forty Bazaars are running this summer on Thursdays from 3 – 7pm, alternating between Ripley and Lucknow. There's between 5 -10 vendors at each market, with live music and food vendors at some of the markets. The first Bazaar in Ripley on June 20 saw approximately 90 people in attendance and staff received very positive feedback about the event.

The Lucknow Tourism office is open for the season, in partnership with the Lucknow Chamber of Commerce

Secrets of the Back Forty is continuing to be promoted through social media, print advertising in tourism guides, branded flags, sandwich boards and postcards.

New tourism signage was installed at Blue Park and Lighthouse Park as well as a new kiosk at Point Clark Community Centre. Replacement of tourism information and signage across from Everlastings is in the works.

The Ripley Business Community is working on the design and installation of a mural, to be installed on the side of FIG Studio Kitchen. It's anticipated it will be complete by early fall and is designed on panels to allow for flexibility of placement.

Downtown Improvement Program

One Community Energy Efficiency grant was awarded to Hands on Healing in downtown Lucknow for the installation of an energy efficient air conditioner. Applications are still open for the new grant programs in partnership with Spruce the Bruce for Experience and Product Development, Agri-Food Tourism and Business Accessibility and Adaptability.

Financial Impacts:

All projects included in this report are included in the 2024 Economic Development Budget.

Performance Measurement:

The success of the Ripley Downtown Revitalization project will be measured by the increase in business and investment in downtown Ripley and resident satisfaction.

The success of the Community Organization Registry and Volunteer webpage will be measured through reduced staff time maintaining and searching for up-to-date contact information, number of volunteer opportunities listed and feedback from community organizations.

Strategic Area:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Embrace a thriving rural lifestyle | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Municipal Service Delivery |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare for Inclusive Growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Financial Stability |

Strategic Goal:

- **Build Community Capacity**
- **Facilitate Community Well Being**
- **Encourage Economic Vitality**

Respectfully Submitted By:

Michelle Goetz, Manager of Strategic Initiatives

Amy Irwin, Economic Development Officer

Report Approved By:

Jodi MacArthur, Chief Administrative Officer