



The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

Staff Report

Report Title: Economic Development Status Update August 2024

Date: Aug. 6, 2024

Report Number: BED-2024-08-15

Department: BED

File Number: C11 BED 24

Prepared By: Amy Irwin

Attachments: None

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report BED-2024-08-15, prepared by Amy Irwin, Economic Development Officer.

Background:

This report provides an update on economic development initiatives.

Discussion/Analysis/Overview:

Economic Development

Staff is continuing to work with local businesses and realtors in Huron-Kinloss on attracting businesses to our community.

Partnership with Spruce the Bruce funding has resulted in grants to four Huron-Kinloss businesses. These grants were part of the new offerings available because of the expansion of the municipal-wide CIP and new grant programs – Product and Experience Development, Agri-food Innovation and Business Accessibility and Adaptability. Due to our partnership with the County of Bruce, these businesses were able to leverage 33/33/33 funding. A full report of businesses who received funding will be available once funding agreements are executed.

Staff are working with County staff on Spruce the Bruce video testimonials and downtown walk throughs and interviews with grant recipients. Promotional material will be available to share once completed.

Applications are continuing to be accepted and reviewed for our Downtown Improvement Program.

Ripley Downtown Revitalization Project

The Ripley Downtown Revitalization project is moving forward with installation of window clings, promoting opening a business here, in vacant storefronts at 82 and 84 Huron St., Ripley; as well as the installation of 20 wooden window boxes, constructed by Harold Galloway of the Woodshop, on all storefronts in downtown Ripley, by the end of August.

The final report from Pl.ural on current state analysis and design renderings is expected to be available by the end of August, which will assist the team in determining direction moving forward.

The Ripley Business Community is moving forward with a mural installation on the side of FIG Studio Kitchen, expected to be completed by mid-September.

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 is open daily from 10:30-5 until September 2.

As of July 31, 733 adults and 340 children have paid for a tour of the Lighthouse and Museum. Staff run a children's program each Friday afternoon with an average of 10 children attending each week. The Lighthouse Speaker Series has run twice and is planned for 2 more events this summer, with approximately 8 attendees at each event. A sold-out paint night at the Lighthouse was hosted on July 30, with 18 attendees. Staff are planning a National Lighthouse Day celebration on August 7, with games, facepainting and treats.

The Point Clark Beach Association continues to be a great community partner, hosting local pipe band events, a youth Bike parade and music events at the Lighthouse. The Association also cleaned up the Lighthouse gardens and erected 2 painted cutouts on site for visitor photo opportunities.

Back Forty Bazaars are running this summer on Thursdays from 3 – 7pm, alternating between Ripley and Lucknow. There has been between 5 -10 vendors at the Ripley Bazaar, with live music and food vendors. The Lucknow Bazaar has seen 3-4 vendors at the first one and 2 vendors at the second one, with the third one being cancelled due to lack of vendors. Staff will be evaluating whether to continue in Lucknow this summer. Over 500 attendees have been recorded during the 5 Bazaars held, as of July 31 and staff received very positive feedback about the event.

Secrets of the Back Forty is continuing to be promoted through social media, print advertising in tourism guides, branded flags, sandwich boards and postcards. Three bicycle repair stations have been installed this summer in Lewis Park, Caledonia Park and Lighthouse Park, funded by the 2023 RTO7 grant.

25th Anniversary of Huron-Kinloss

The first stage of our virtual time capsule is complete; a video interview with a past Mayor and Deputy Mayor took place in June at the Point Clark Lighthouse. Staff will be promoting a new engagement opportunity with the public on www.haveyoursayhk.ca asking for photos and video clips representing what they love about Huron-Kinloss. The Team would also like to schedule a video interview with current Mayor Don Murray and Deputy Mayor Jim Hanna for this Fall, staff will be in touch to schedule dates.

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.

Success of grant programs will be measured by completed projects by businesses in Huron-Kinloss.

Success of tourism will be measured by number of visitors recorded at the Point Clark Lighthouse and at the Back Forty Bazaars.

Strategic Area:

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| <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:

Amy Irwin, Economic Development Officer

Report Approved By:

Jodi MacArthur, Chief Administrative Officer