



The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

Staff Report

Report Title: Business and Economic Officer May Status report

Prepared By: Amy Irwin, Business and Economic Officer

Department: BED

Date: May. 2, 2022

Report Number: BED-2022-05-24

File Number: C11 BED 22 D02

Attachments:

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby approves Report Number BED-2022-05-24 prepared by Amy Irwin, Business and Economic Officer.

Background:

This report provides the Committee with an update and recommendation from the Business & Economic Officer.

Discussion:

Economic Development

The Economic Development team attended the Economic Developers Council of Ontario 2 day virtual conference on April 6 and 7.

Business and Economic Officer had ongoing communication and consultations with the County of Bruce regarding welcoming newcomers and County initiatives that are underway in conjunction with a County-hired consultant.

Community Improvement Plan and Spruce the Bruce discussions were had with the County, as well as internally. It is anticipated that the original Spruce the Bruce funding stream will be announced later in May, with the enhanced grants to be rolled out at a later date.

A business survey was created and sent to 181 local businesses, with a 10% return rate thus far. Purpose of the survey was to better understand what businesses are currently in Huron-Kinloss, their current challenges, what programs and supports businesses access from the Township, what businesses are needed here, and suggestions for improvement. Also, support was provided to the Hub's Homestead

launch; with the Lucknow Chamber of Commerce and Ripley Business Community groups; as well as ongoing local business connection, support with grants and addressing local business concerns.

Key indicators of success:

- Increased knowledge in best economic development practices.
- Continued engagement and a positive working relationship with Bruce County partners.
- Successful applications from Huron-Kinloss to Bruce County's Spruce the Bruce program, resulting in façade improvement and consistent signage to support businesses.
- Businesses in Huron-Kinloss feel informed, supported and encouraged to provide feedback to better serve their needs.

Tourism

Secrets of the Back 40 branding project was awarded to Interkom as per the By-Law 2022-61 approved on April 20, 2022, with the initial kick-off meeting scheduled for May 2.

Shine Bright! The Point Clark Lighthouse Museum Capital fundraising campaign with a \$200,000 goal is advertised in the annual Discovery Guide and a communications and marketing campaign will be rolled out the second week of May.

The Regional Tourism Organization for Bruce, Grey, Simcoe (RTO 7) has announced applications are open for a Tourism Relief Fund for tourism based businesses and municipalities. RTO7 is administering non-repayable financial support ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000.

The intention of this fund is to help the recovery of the tourism industry from the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, to enhance tourism offerings within Region 7 (BruceGreySimcoe) and to become a more Sustainable and Inclusive destination.

The Economic Development staff met with the advisors with RTO7 and it was determined that Secrets of the Back 40 would be an ideal project to apply for funding for. Staff recommends that Economic Development staff apply for this grant, before the May 12, 2022 deadline. There is no requirement for matching funds, however the grant is 100% reimbursement up to \$100,000.

Key indicators of success:

- Secrets of the Back 40 rebranded by the end of June, with new logo and design concepts to effectively market the new initiative.
- The Point Clark Lighthouse Revitalization campaign meets the \$200,000 fundraising goal, to re-imagine new exhibits and revitalize the physical space by the end of 2022, and will re-open to tourists in with an updated and fresh look in 2023, injecting money into our local economy.

- We receive the full funding applied for to rollout the full Secrets of the Back 40 tourism initiative with the goal of attracting new visitors to Huron-Kinloss, encourage local spending and invite locals to re-discover local producers and spend more time in our downtowns.

Financial Impacts:

None

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, Business and Economic Officer

Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer