

Toward
- BROCKTON ACTION PLAN 2025 -
FEEDBACK

on the

PRELIMINARY LIST of POTENTIAL 2021-2025 ACTIONS

Following the Council/senior staff workshop on May 18, 2021, and the previous workshop on May 4, Bill Winegard compiled a “long list” entitled “PRELIMINARY LIST of POTENTIAL 2021-2025 ACTIONS”. That “Preliminary List” is the foundation of this document.

As indicated to Council, the Preliminary List is definitely not Council’s commitment to action in the 2021-25 period, and was put forward with the specific purpose of getting feedback. The Preliminary Action List was e-mailed to eight groups of invitees that had been identified by staff and with which Zoom meetings were held during the week of June 7. Various Senior Staff members attended to provide input and insight as required depending on the focus group topic.

Although discussion ranged somewhat more broadly, each meeting was 1.5 hours, and focused on a specific Pillar in the Preliminary List. The meetings included:

- Heritage, Culture, and Community (7 people)
- Quality of Life (8 people)
- Environment and Land Use Planning (7 people)
- Economic Development – retail (5 people)
- Economic Development – industry/manufacturing (8 people)
- Economic Development – agriculture (10 people)
- Economic Development – building/development (7 people)

My sincere thanks to all participants for their time and insights. We had some key stakeholders within each group and had valuable discussions about current and future state.

As they looked down the relevant “long list” of potential actions, participants were asked to consider these questions:

- Would the action be EFFECTIVE in making progress toward the community goal?
- Would it yield VALUE in terms of the progress it could make compared to the cost, time, and resources it was likely to entail?
- Would it garner the partners and support it would need to be successful?
- Is there another action – or a variation on the theme – that would be at least as effective, yield at least as much value, and gain at least as much partnership?

In the document below, Bill Winegard has summarized the feedback he received on each potential action (on some of the potential actions, the groups had no comment)

Bill’s summary of the feedback he received from community participants is shown in this document in purple font with a gold border.

Feedback

In addition, Bill held an additional in depth meeting with the Brockton senior staff team, seeking a technical assessment of the potential actions. Specifically, that feedback focused on these questions:

- What factors may affect the FEASIBILITY of the potential action?
- What factors could affect the TIMING within the 2021-25 period or beyond?
- What external CONDITIONS would need to be in place for successful implementation?
- Are there other initiatives underway but not yet mentioned, that could continue to require significant time and resources within the 2021-25 period?

Bill’s summary of the senior staff team’s technical assessment is shown in this document in red font with a blue border.

Feedback

Again, my thanks to the senior staff team for their careful review.

Bill Winegard

Toward

BROCKTON ACTION PLAN 2025

PRELIMINARY LIST of POTENTIAL 2021-2025 ACTIONS

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

1. Keeping our Heritage Alive

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items:

- I. Include space for safe storage of certain Heritage archives in any new or expanded Community Centre or Municipal office

Agreement that more and permanent storage space is urgently needed, not just for Heritage items. In a new municipal office would be good but not necessarily there.

Document archives are most commonly used for genealogy and therefore best in a quiet supervised accessible location with sit-down space. The Library would be best suited to that need. Documents can also be scanned and "stored in the cloud" for easier access for users. Artifacts, now being stored in the Fire Station, face the same lack of permanent passive storage space as do many Municipal departments. Adequate permanent storage space in a new or renovated community centre would meet those needs or looking at Victoria Jubilee Hall or Library.

- II. Develop a plan, potentially including partners like local businesses and other institutions, to showcase artifacts related to Brockton's history and heritage

Any location with someone present to keep an eye on the artifacts while doing other things could work, including the Municipal Office and Library.

- III. Recognize and promote historical sites in our hamlets and rural areas
- IV. Develop a booklet on Brockton's history and heritage, to be distributed to new residents

Strong enthusiasm for practical ways to showcase heritage such as proposed. Use rotating exhibits. More frequent exhibits at Victoria Jubilee Hall. Maybe videos to share stories and complement the written histories.

- V. Develop a program to recognize property owners and builders that have preserved and/or improved heritage buildings

Strong enthusiasm. Added ideas:

- Plaques on bldgs summarizing history and giving name of renovators
- Narrated video of heritage bldgs walking/driving tour.
- Get a link on the Ontario Heritage website

2. Supporting Community and Cultural Events

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items:

- I. Continued municipal financial support for activity at Victoria Jubilee Hall, and examine potential to offer a wider range of community events (e.g., Art Show, conferences)

Potential to create a joint task force between the Victoria Hall Board, municipal staff, and perhaps other organizations, to develop a three-year business plan, projecting costs and revenues, and identifying the municipal financial and in-kind support needed or alternatives to sustain and grow offerings.

- II. Promote cultural events in Brockton's hamlets (example: Elmwood Concerts in Park, Cargill outdoor concerts)
- III. Continue to work with the BIA to develop and promote more events downtown
- IV. Expand on the community calendar for increased promotion
- V. Publicize externally and to new residents the range and diversity of community events and cultural activities in Brockton, so Brockton is considered their "community of choice"
- VI. Use the Durham Street Park as a hub for events in all seasons, building on the successful Christmas market
- VII. Bring back the Watershed Festival or a similar large event

Support for all of the above.

Given the limited geographic area of the BIA, and therefore its limited capacity, this package of initiatives will require leadership from municipal staff and additional staff time. To facilitate this package efficiently, a budget on which staff can draw and a policy staff can implement on the waiver of fees for facility use, should be included. Reviving community events, particularly in the hamlets, are likely to be met with enthusiasm by volunteers.

- VIII. Display the work of local artists and craftspeople throughout the community, such as in community centres, Victoria Jubilee Hall, Durham Park, and local businesses

Could have a rotating wall display at the Library. Victoria Jubilee Hall very willing to have regular weekends displaying work of local artists. Very likely that some businesses would be interested

- IX. Consider a program of municipal "seed" grants for new or revived community events or assist with grant applications

Doesn't need to be a specific program. Volunteers will be excited to revive events. Municipality just needs to be ready and willing to help on request. Help with getting grants from Province would be good.

3. Supporting our Volunteer Organizations

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items:

- I. Continue with the Municipality's volunteer appreciation event, and consider whether it could be expanded to include appreciation of service clubs
- II. Convene a regular, perhaps annual, get-together with local service clubs in order to compare plans and projects, including those of the Municipality, and to discuss the help they need from the Municipality
- III. Promote local organizations and events, and volunteer opportunities, to new residents
- IV. Develop a clear projection of the demographic make-up (age groups, occupational groups, etc.) of Brockton in the foreseeable future, and the likely impact of any demographic changes on volunteer organizations and activities

Support for all of the above.

The same need for demographic projections on the future make-up of Brockton applies not just to volunteer organizations, but also to recreation facilities and programs, physician recruitment, policing requirements, fire service, etc. A Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan is budgeted for 2021; would include projections needed for all operations.

- V. Work toward a municipal staff position that would be clearly responsible for providing municipal assistance to volunteer-led events in terms of possible grant applications, annual calendar of events, liaison with municipal departments and facilities, advertising and promotion, volunteer coordination and recruitment

Support for this idea, the advantage for community orgs of having one go-to contact at the Municipality. Overcomes the problem of staff turnover. Could ensure that the community calendar was well-known and updated. Expertise in grant applications.

Concern expressed, however, that a position such as this typically gets a variety of other duties heaped on it, to the point that it can no longer be proactive, organizations don't get the help they hoped for, and the impact is not realized.

Consensus that art, culture, and community events are what gives a community its cohesion, reputation, and quality of life. Doesn't take big \$\$ but does take an investment in time and leadership.

See staff comments above with respect to an accelerated program of community events and festivals. If this package were adopted in the Action Plan, staff would report on projected costs, staffing, terms of reference, and working relationships.

QUALITY OF LIFE

1. An Active Community

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items:

- I. Initiate the planning for a new recreation multiplex –
 - Engage residents to determine what facilities (in addition to an up-to-date arena and community hall) should be included in a multiplex ((example: second icepad, indoor walking track, indoor pool, indoor soccer, skate park)
 - Develop a funding plan for the resulting multiplex concept
 - Work with community partners to launch a fund-raising campaign
 - Prepare grant applications ready to submit to senior government funding programs

Strong support for planning a “statement” facility of this sort, bearing in mind youth crime prevention, attraction of physicians and other professionals, attracting young couples working at local industries and Bruce power, and accommodating growth. Dependent on large grants and fund-raising, but the group expects that large grants would be available and that groups across the Municipality would participate in the fund-raising. Make sure the need for whatever is included in the project is demonstrated. Walking track would serve an important demographic.

However, orgs in the hamlets will want to see clear and corresponding spending in the hamlets (not an either/or).

The Parks, Recreation, Culture Master Plan, to be initiated in 2021 and reporting in 2022, will project the impact of growth on the number and age of recreation facility users and consult the public on perceived recreation facility needs. In the meantime, the Municipality has become aware of a federal government grant program offering up to \$25 million toward recreation facilities and is submitting an application. If approved, design would take place in 2024 and construction start in 2025 based on secure funding. Land available in conjunction with the expansion of the East Ridge Business Park.

- II. Develop and implement a community “Walkability” plan, including
 - a high year-round standard of maintenance of sidewalks, trails, and accessibility features for all ages
 - Upgrades to the trails
 - developing a plan for, and ensuring that new developments in Walkerton provide, direct pedestrian connections to the downtown and other services, and interconnection with existing parks and trails
 - construct and maintain trails and proper sidewalks in the hamlets
 - work with volunteer organizations to develop, maintain, and promote our trails

- promote our trails through such means as more signage and maps, inclusion in Bruce County material, and the Recreation Guide

Strong support for a walkability plan. Trails and sidewalks are good value for the spending they require, and serve all ages. Volunteers in the hamlets take in interest in trails. Kudos for the new sidewalk in Elmwood.

For cost and terrain reasons, winter maintenance will not be practical for all trails. The Master Plan will help us to select the trails where winter maintenance would have the greatest cost/benefit

2. Support for all Ages and Places

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items:

- I. plan for the end of the current municipal Child Care Centre lease in 2036
 - Consideration of a phased plan to incorporate placing the Child Care centre in conjunction with a possible new Municipal Complex
 - by recognizing need for more playground space/amenities at the Child Care Centre

Value of the child Care Centre is recognized and co-location with a school is considered essential. However, given the 2036 lease date and the other costly projects under consideration, expanding or moving the Child Care Centre is not considered an immediate concern. priority yet.

Additional item: provide space in any new Rec complex (or sooner) for the Early Years program. It too is an important feature for young families

Early Years should consider operating in Cargill also

Although Brockton has a 12-month termination option under the lease, the Child Care is best located in conjunction with a school, for parent convenience and after-school programs. Growth will put pressure on both the school and the Child Care, so it is quite likely that planning discussions with the Board of Education may be needed before 2036.

The last Child Care expansion added 2 rooms at approx. \$1.5 million. The previous capital expansion loan was paid off in 2021. Council has committed to a yearly contribution to the reserve fund to replenish Child Care reserve. Grants for Child Care expansion are likely available from Ministry of Education and from new commitments announced in 2021-22 Federal budget.

- II. continue to promote the Child Care Centre as a key “competitive advantage” in attracting new families and new businesses

Should be featured in the “Welcome to Brockton” package.

- III. Develop a clear projection of the demographic make-up (age groups, family size, occupations, etc.) of Brockton in the foreseeable future, and the demand that this future demographic make-up will generate for recreation facilities and programs
- IV. Develop more activity programming for all ages in the hamlets, working with local organizations whenever possible (example: outdoor skating loops, seniors' activities)
- V. Increase the availability and removal of playground equipment throughout Brockton
 - Review through Master Recreation Plan process
 - Monitor and enhance equipment in the hamlets, working with local orgs
 - Work with developers to achieve playground space and amenities in subdivisions
- VI. Be prepared to consider how the Municipality could assist local organizations and/or other governments to organize some form(s) of public transportation

Contrasting thoughts:

- On one hand, no advantage to hamlets/rural. Everyone has to drive anyway. Neighbours or local orgs will help out if someone needs help getting somewhere.
- On other hand, large employers and housing advocates emphasize that many employees – particularly new arrivals or those whose income does not guarantee a reliable vehicle – need some sort of mobility option other than private vehicle. Seen as part and parcel of the Affordable housing issue, although not just an issue for Brockton alone to solve (employees may also be coming from/going to other towns).

Bruce County is looking into this issue and potential options, in conjunction with Saugeen Mobility. Study will bring potential partners to the table, including Bruce Power.

3. A Healthy Population

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items:

- I. Continue the financial and other Municipal incentives offered to attract new physicians
- II. Undertake an active marketing campaign to promote Brockton to potential medical practitioners as a growing and family-friendly community with a high quality of life
- III. Develop a clear projection of the demographic make-up (age groups, family size, occupations, etc.) of Brockton in the foreseeable future, and the demand for medical services likely to be generated by this future demographic make-up

Brockton is one doctor short of what Min of Health considers a full complement, but the Physician Recruitment Committee still has two incentive packages in reserve. Experience suggests what works are the good words of the existing doctors, the high quality of life, and the fact that our hospital offers residencies. Just keep doing what we have been doing.

Additional items: Advocate with the County and Province for more nursing home beds in Brockton. The existing stock of seniors' housing options of all kinds is inadequate. The \$2 million Hospice fundraising campaign put on hold because of COVID but the need remains. Advocate for faster certification of US trained doctors returning to Canada.

4. A Safe Community

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items:

- I. Plan for the 2023 expiry of Brockton's current contract with the OPP by
 - Be prepared to discuss with adjacent municipalities the potential for joint contracting for police service
 - Engaging residents and businesses regarding their perceptions of the current level of policing service, potential increases in the level of service, and the value they would place on potential increases to the level of service
 - Clarifying level-of-service expectations in urban areas and rural areas
 - Obtaining hours-of- service estimates for potential level of service enhancements

Agreement with looking at level of service enhancements, particularly hamlets/rural speeding, thefts. Neighbourhood Watch? Detachment under-staffed, but recruits arriving.

- II. Continue to place a priority on maintaining effective fire-fighting equipment and on the effectiveness, health and safety of our emergency services
- III. Develop a long term plan for the Regional Fire Training Centre in Brockton

Strong support. Does not require a new building; physical training will be held at Bruce Power. Classwork for Bruce and Grey fire services will be held in Brockton.

Regional fire training process accelerates the certification and thus the safety of Brockton firefighters and facilitates recruiting.

Every municipality must complete a a Community Risk Assessment of all infrastructure by 2024. This will involve significant staff time and a robust project plan with any associated outside expertise required. This item will be added to the Action plan.

LAND USE PLANNING and the NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Attainably-priced Homes and Adequate Rental Accommodation

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items:

- I. Through the ongoing Bruce County Official Plan Review, advocate for policies pertaining to Brockton that
 - Require a percentage of units in a new subdivision to be semi-detached and townhouses
 - Permit – subject to appropriate conditions - new rental units within/behind houses
 - Permit – subject to appropriate conditions – new rental units within/behind commercial
 - Permit multi-residential buildings or seniors-oriented accommodations in commercial areas within a short distance of services and amenities

Widespread support for these measures, and unanimous agreement that lack of adequate rental accommodation and affordably-priced houses is a critical strategic issue for Brockton.

It was noted that the Official Plan already contains provisions requiring density in new subdivisions, permitting rental units in conjunction with commercial and single/semi residential houses, and permitting downtown multi-residential. The County OP Review has resulted in the development of “secondary suite” provisions” (a separate rental unit on a residential lot). Participants emphasized that Brockton needs to pre-zone and educate - pre-zoning so that those interested needed no rezoning and minimal red tape; education to let businesses and homeowners know it was permitted and straightforward (maybe short videos?)

Other notes

- Auxiliary rental units may not be feasible in hamlets due to sewage treatment regs
- Parking requirements for rental units should be reviewed. Unreasonable parking space requirements can be a significant disincentive
- Energy conservation standards should be considered as a requirement for new/renovated rental units
- Encourage pre-built auxiliary units for rental in new houses also

Would make sense to reword; no need to mention what zoning already allows. Need to support County “secondary Suite” provisions and review to implement locally through the zoning by-law/ same lot.

- II. Advocate with Bruce County for the development of more rent-geared-to-income housing units locally

County aware of Brockton’s need. Advocacy can help County appeal for more Provincial subsidy \$\$

Virtually unanimous support for a much more active role in Brockton for Bruce County Housing. County staff noted that “rent-geared-to-income” was just one of several Provincially-funded or CMHC-subsidized programs through which County provides rental units at below-market rents (all together called “community housing”), the majority being available to low/middle-income working people, and could include both new-builds and renovation of existing buildings. There does not appear to be a formula for which municipalities get how much Bruce Housing attention; it depends more on availability of land or suitable existing units, expiring agreements, and partnership opportunities.

The County also administers a first-time home-buyers interest-free loan incentive program funded by the Province and also has access to incentive programs offered by CMHC. These programs are not fully-subscribed: funds are available. Both Brockton and the development industry may have a role to play in publicizing these programs, although the Brockton house market may already have shot past the maximum house price for which incentives are available.

III. Attempt to recruit developers of seniors-oriented housing

Support for the objective of well-built, well-organized housing options for seniors. Brockton faces a serious growing need.

IV. Be prepared to consider the use of municipal surplus land as incentive to developers in return for the construction of rental units

Widespread support for this type of incentive, although limited with the lands currently available for such purpose.

Some development-industry participants expressed a distaste for having municipal conditions on what they would be able to build on land contributed by the Municipality.

Additional ideas presented.

- Large farms would welcome a change in planning policy so that they could provide low-cost housing on-site as an option for employees (e.g., mobile homes or double-wides) that would reduce travel for employees and give them time to save for a house. Temporary (5 years?) occupancies; no severances

2. A Diversity of Housing Types

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items:

- I. Community Improvement Plan encourages building of/conversion to “green” housing

Some support for “walking and chewing gum”, combining energy conservation objectives with housing objectives. On the other hand, it was suggested that requiring high standards of energy-saving/energy-generating measures could be a disincentive. An efficient and effective approach might be general policies establishing an energy-efficient standard for new development.

Community Improvement Plan already authorizes incentives for LEED standards and alternative energy generation but have not been implemented.

- II. Advocate through the County OP Review for policies pertaining to Brockton that:
 - Allocate some of the anticipated residential growth to new lots – subject to appropriate conditions – in the hamlets
 - Provide for the creation of some rural residential lots, subject to appropriate siting and lot sizes and provided that such lots not interfere with agricultural operations

Widespread support for such policies, subject to appropriate conditions (some concern that encouraging low-density development would be contrary to intent of Provincial policy.)

The County OP Review is proposing policies consistent with these proposed actions; so, the better wording would be “Support the County...”.

- III. Consider undertaking a municipal development, similar to East Ridge Business Park development, wherein the Municipality acquires and services a parcel and negotiates with developers to construct a variety of housing types meeting community objectives

Widespread agreement that Brockton must take an active, not just passive, role in stimulating housing with affordable rents and attainable prices. Providing such housing would give Brockton a competitive advantage, and the lack of it is already costing us jobs. General support for a significant initiative, but a variety of ideas on the form it should take:

- Some development-industry participants expressed disdain for the capacity of Brockton or any government to develop anything, but don’t oppose the County providing more below-market units
- Some manufacturing employers and agricultural employers feel this issue most acutely, urge some form of public-private partnership, and want to be at the table when this is discussed
- Virtually all other participants agree with an active approach, definitely including County Housing, where Brockton (+ partners?) provides incentives (land? servicing?), the overall vision, and the pre-zoning, so that builders can get in and build.

This initiative needs to involve County which has/could have the authority, expertise and funding to develop at below-market prices and/or act as landlord.
Wording is too specific. Should be general public/private partnership including County
Munic now receiving private applications to build smaller apartment units – might meet demand from medium-income tenants

3. Enhanced Waste Management

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

I. Institute curbside pickup of household compost (green bin)

Agreed. keep compostables out of landfill; methane concern. Consider Minto example.

- Issue of rural vs urban need (farms and rural properties better able to handle their own compost on-site)
- Needs an educational component

Munic will be calling tenders for curbside collection in 2021; could ask for prices to add green bin program

Munic now considering new machinery to deal with waste from backyard composters

II. Plan for the transition away from the Blue Box program

Not being implemented until 2026; details not worked out; uncertain whether savings will result. Brockton doing pilot projects to recycle agricultural plastic and polystyrene; don't know if Prov system will include such things or allow for local pilot projects.

III. Utilize available funding to fund additional measures to divert waste from landfill

Concern about the effectiveness of the Provincially-dictated recycling program

- Not being implemented in Bruce and Grey until 2026
- Range of items to be recycled may be less than already being recycled
- Using Provincial averages for % of items to be recycled will reduce the % that producers will pay for in rural parts of Province
- Doubtful that Municipality will save much if current level of service is maintained

Additional ideas presented.

- General agreement waste management functions should gravitate to County level
 - Needs economies of scale in facilities, programs, expertise
 - More consistent service; easier public understanding
 - More influence with Province, more effective advocacy

Additional items:

- By 2025, need to look at feasibility of adding licensed capacity to Brant landfill
- Waste Management Services Review consultant recommended that waste management responsibility gravitate to County; no follow-up yet because of COVID, but County and lower-tier municipal staff will be reviewing recommendations; ; will take time; should be on Action Plan

4. Environmental Recovery

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

I. Support and expand the tree-planting program

Should include an inventory of our existing tree canopy, so we know where and what to plant; partners would include SVCA; federal government promises 2 billion tree-planting campaign.

Should review and enforce tree-planting requirements in subdivision agreements

II. Support and expand river cleanup and riverbank protection

These actions supported, but additional ideas encouraged:

- OP policies that encourage low-impact development, e.g., permeable surface parking areas, swales in new lots to absorb runoff, protection of tree canopy
- Municipal pilot project to show what can be done, e.g., permeable surface parking lots, electrical vehicle plug-ins, evolution to an electric fleet, wetland protection
- Public education with real-world examples, maybe videos, visitable examples in other municipalities

Riverbank erosion stabilization study now going on; report in 2022 will set our remedial plan and cost estimates. Follow-up will require staff time, potentially significant Munic expenditure, and seeking fed/prov funding. Should be noted in Action Plan

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Expedite New Residential Development

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Undertake an aggressive marketing campaign to families and retirees in Ontario cities promoting Brockton as a community of choice with a high quality of life

Doubt the value of a marketing campaign. Brockton has been “found” already. Effort needs to focus on good internet and cellphone service throughout the municipality and other ways to enhance quality of life

- II. Convene a regular “developer’s round-table” to determine how the Municipality could advance their applications, to compare notes on projects and plans underway, and to work together to promote Brockton
- III. Continue to improve and streamline development approval processes
- IV. Update website development portal for ease of information access

Strong support for all efforts to streamline and improve development approval processes. Recognition that Brockton has had to adapt quite suddenly to the number, size, and complexity of applications. Development-industry participants are keen to be involved in putting forward their process issues, discussing potential alternatives, and providing their experience working in other municipalities. Municipality encouraged to communicate changes to process it is considering. Suggestion that a development “round-table” would need to be “mediated” to ensure constructive dialogue.

The discussion included a wide variety of possible process improvements that could be evaluated as part of the streamlining initiative.

- V. Evaluate:
 - whether the current arrangement for County planning services is the best option for expediting development approval functions in Brockton
 - whether a “development coordinator / planning” staff position would be a timely improvement for development approval processing and handling volumes

Strong agreement that alternatives need to be evaluated and action taken. A good part of the process improvement required is having enough staff time to respond promptly to inquiries and expedite steps. Some participants did not feel qualified on increasing capacity at County vs Brockton, but common feeling that local/approachable was most needed. Perhaps more capacity needed at both levels.

Neither existing Brockton nor existing County staff have the time available to meet expectations for expedited processing of applications. It likely makes sense for the County to retain planning policy development and comments, while Brockton adds capacity to coordinate and process applications locally.

If a development coordinator type position were added, a review of fees should be undertaken in order to recoup a significant portion of the cost of the position from non-tax sources.

While processing can and should be expedited, it is important to note the potential for applicants to remain dissatisfied if their applications fail to conform to OP policies or subdivision standards.

Most of the processing after the planning approval has been given involves approvals and inspections of an engineering nature. Both developing standards and expediting processes at this stage should also be examined.

2. Expedite New Commercial/Industrial Development

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Advance the approved expansion of the East Ridge Business Park and implement an aggressive marketing campaign

Virtually universal support for this. Some requests for info on inquiries Munic is getting to which expanded ERBP will be the answer.

- II. Encourage employment uses around the Saugeen Airport by
 - Advocating through the County Official Plan Review for policies that permit the development of employment uses in and around the airport property
 - Marketing the Airport vicinity as a desirable location for aircraft-related and air-transport-dependent businesses

No support for putting effort or \$\$ toward this concept

- Neither manufacturing or development participants use the airport or know of businesses who would use it, or be attracted by its proximity
- Munic should not invest time or money that would detract from expansion of ERBP
- Lack of water/sewer limits type of businesses that could be accommodated
- Servicing of the area would be a poor investment

Staff are not aware of any expressions of interest in developing business premises in the vicinity of the airport.

- III. Continue to fund the Brockton share of airport operations
- IV. Maximize the employment potential of the Walkerton downtown by
 - Durham St Park development and a range of activities in it
 - Enhancement of the Riverbank and activities along it
 - Festivals, events, and downtown development that increase foot traffic
 - Effective partnership with the BIA

An accelerated program of downtown festivals and events seen as particularly important in short term (over the next year?) for COVID recovery. Important that Munic be seen to recognize the damage done and to help businesses to bounce back. Similarly, extend effort to facilitate festivals and events in the hamlets.

(Note: COVID-recovery initiatives should be grouped under their own heading: see proposed Economic Development heading #4)

- V. Support policies that maximize on-farm income by
 - Continuing to advocate for high-speed internet service and natural gas infrastructure in rural areas

The recently approved \$20 million Provincial funding will permit construction of a rural natural gas network to begin in 2023 and complete in 2025

- Advocating through the County Official Plan Review for policies that permit a wide range of on-farm employment uses, provide that they do not/would not interfere with agricultural operations
- Accommodating and promoting farm-gate sales and farmers markets

Support for these actions as far as they go (add advocacy for more reliable cell-phone service). But agricultural participants recommend an additional series of actions, particularly with respect to labour force issues.

Additional suggestions made:

- Planning policies to allow farms to create on-site employee housing, e.g., mobile homes for newcomers and young families. Perhaps 5-year occupancies?
- Actions to raise the profile of agriculture as important trade with decent income
 - Promote Fair
 - Distinct ag trade training programs at colleges (Georgian, Conestoga)
 - Ag skills course in high school, involve farmers
 - Expand Launch Pad program, involve farmers
- Establish either a person on Brockton staff or small committee, that understand agriculture and advocate for supportive planning policies and infrastructure
- More information/consultation by Brockton and County on plans for road construction and impact on agriculture
- Facilitate farm solutions to environmental issues, e.g., treatment of green bin waste

See proposed Economic Development heading #5, grouping agriculture-related actions.

- VI. Maintain and enhance the current “SaugeenConnects” regional approach to labour force attraction issues

Strong support for a regional approach to labour force issues, and emphasis on the severity of these issues for manufacturing and agriculture. Considerable discussion about the importance of affordable homes, rental housing, and transportation options for attracting and retaining employees.

Large employers looking for a “round-table” format to brainstorm and evaluate solutions, and potentially be partners with government in implementing. Joint projects more likely to gain momentum.

Noted demand for rural lots – lifestyle + accommodate home industries

3. Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Apply the CIP to the whole municipality, with a steadily enhanced annual funding base

Support. Would make County façade improvement incentives available to all commercial areas. Don't need huge individual incentives, but need bigger budget for whole Municipality.

- II. Provide a variety of incentives for property owners to improve their properties in accordance with municipal community improvement objectives, including:
- Expedited processing of applications for municipal incentives, zoning approvals, permit applications, etc.
 - Modest matching cash grants from the municipality
 - Modest matching interest-free loans from the municipality
 - Permission to use/encroach on adjacent municipal property/rights-of-way
 - Familiarity with and assistance to apply to relevant grant and loan programs available from provincial or federal levels

All fine, but most important is to pre-zone/minimize barriers (e.g., review minimum rental unit size). Then let property owners know that it's easy to do, not hard. Testimonials?

- III. Evaluate effectiveness of incentives at meeting community improvement objectives
- IV. Adopt a variety of community improvement objectives in respect of which incentives would be available, including:
- Improvement of the street-facing façades, including signage, of existing commercial or heritage buildings

- Conversion of vacant or underused space in commercial buildings into a rental housing unit, or upgrading of a vacant rental unit in a commercial building, or an addition to a commercial building to create a new rental housing unit
- Renovation of a heritage building to include commercial space, tourist accommodation, or rental residential accommodation
- A new purpose-built multi-residential rental building, including rent-geared-to-income housing and seniors-oriented housing
- Significant renovation of an existing commercial, industrial or multi-residential building to install energy-saving or energy-generation measures
- Renovation to, or undertakings in, commercial premises that will be demonstrably important to the business's recovery from COVID-era damage

All fine.

Additional item to facilitate commercial development in the hamlets: Need public washrooms. Bars/restaurants require washrooms which require septic systems. But cost and lack of space make expanded septic systems prohibitive, particularly at start-up stage. As volume of activity grows, supply and permanence of public facilities can be re-calibrated.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE

1. INCLUSIVE GOVERNMENT

1. A. Inclusive Governance and Operations so that residents and businesses in Walkerton, hamlets, and rural areas feel part of Brockton

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Advocate during the Bruce County Official Plan Review for an allocation of residential growth to the hamlets
- II. Support municipal programs such as youth and seniors' recreation in hamlets, community activities in hamlets such as festivals, and the heritage of the hamlets
- III. Fund streetscape improvements in the hamlets that reflect/build on their character, heritage, and amenities
- IV. Continue to hold an annual Council meeting in each hamlet, particularly when items relevant to that area are on the agenda, providing time for local residents' input

Note that in some hamlet locations, it would not be possible to broadcast meetings

- V. Use political influence to advocate with other levels of government for agriculture-supporting initiatives that are beyond Brockton jurisdiction or capacity
- VI. Continue to fund the rural road system as the highest municipal contribution in support of agriculture
- VII. Advocate against school closings

1. B. A Welcoming Face to new Brockton residents

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Develop a written "Welcome new neighbour" brochure (with pdf on the website) to be distributed to every new household

Some contents of a Welcome package already exist , such as smoke alarm brochure

- II. Familiarize new residents with the history and character of Brockton
- III. Annual "Welcome new residents" picnic
- IV. Support local associations in recruiting volunteers and participants from among new residents
- V. Emphasize our "Shop Local" message to new residents
- VI. Adopt a municipal statement recognizing and welcoming diversity, community engagement, publicity and staff and Council training.

1. C. Community Engagement

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Work to make the public aware of the amount and type of growth on the books (500 units draft-approved) or applied for, in order to prepare people for change.
- II. Engage the public in grappling with the need to expand infrastructure and programs, and to find the funding for it (i.e., invite the public to put themselves on Council's shoes)
- III. Time-limited ad hoc task forces to study issues and make recommendations, similar to the Municipal Services Review

Note the need to provide adequate staff time to support task forces

- IV. Continue Zoom opportunities to convey information to the public and answer questions about issues.
- V. "Mayor's breakfast" on various themes, including welcoming diversity
- VI. Evaluate committees: are they successfully fulfilling terms of reference, conveying public perceptions, and presenting options for Council

Terms of reference for committees are progressively being developed and adopted. would be feasible to develop a checklist self-evaluation form for committees

- VII. Look at communication alternatives to ensure engagement is effective (e.g. app, website development)

Note that the contract for the "Build Your Brockton" digital consultation expires end of 2021; so, its effectiveness will be evaluated- short-term action item.

1. D. Support for our Volunteer partners

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Revive volunteer appreciation event for Municipal committee members, following pandemic
- II. Consider expanding it to other associations and service clubs working for the betterment of Brockton
- III. Hold an annual forum with local associations for the purpose of exchanging and potentially coordinating plans for community events, construction projects, etc.
- IV. Use Municipal media to make new residents aware of volunteer opportunities and association-led community events
- V. Identify the demographic changes that will affect volunteer activities, particularly in the hamlets

2. RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT

2 A. Support for the recovery of our businesses from the COVID era

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Support a County initiative to reduce the small-business tax ratio, on condition that /as long as the Province compensates municipalities for the loss of municipal revenue
- II. Continue to review municipal regulations to permit new business ideas (e.g., sidewalk patios) even if only temporarily
- III. Publicize and follow the Procurement policy with respect to its “Shop local” practices and support for local businesses
- IV. Expand community improvement area to the whole Municipality; expand program funding and COVID-recovery range of programs
- V. Look at supports for events that will draw people to the area to support the business community

2. B. Continuing to upgrade our practices and reputation for customer service

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Develop and publicize a system and a policy on Customer Service Standards
- II. Institute telephone response protocols so that a caller receives a live voice response and the shortest possible route to the staff member who can deal with the customer’s inquiry/request

Given the typical volume of calls to the Municipal Office, the time per call, and the disruption to any other work assigned to a receptionist, this action would require the the better part of a full-time position to enact as they currently support Treasury functions

- III. Provide a customer service training program for all customer-facing staff positions
- IV. Develop an ambassador program for the Municipality for orientation
- V. Engage the front-line staff when developing policies, programs, or problem solutions, and get regular feedback from front-line staff on customer service trends and issues

2.C. Continuing to give priority to the services to which residents and businesses give priority

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Publicize the relatively high level of performance the Municipality delivers in basic services such as road maintenance, snow clearing, water supply

- II. Continue to seek public input on budget priorities

We could advertise our capital program more effectively by showing each year's achievements on a map. Maps and graphics hold more interest for the public and show what is being achieved in all parts of the Municipality

3. EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

3.A. Review of our processes to improve timing and efficiency

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Adopt fillable on-line application forms; work toward e-permitting for some types of applications
- II. Look at how other municipalities have dealt with increasing development (E.G. Cambridge, Centre Wellington), and steal good ideas (e.g., design standards)
- III. Continue/expand practice of pre-application meetings to chart path to approvals
- IV. Investigate a "Brockton app" and alternative communication improvements
- V. Anticipate future opportunities to improve communications digitally when Brockton has universal high-speed internet service
- VI. Provide staff time for training and the implementation of new processes that will improve productivity

3. B. Service -sharing/Joint purchasing with neighbouring municipalities and County

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Continue to work with the Municipal Innovation Council to examine service and purchasing efficiencies
- II. Look at joint purchase of office products
- III. Look at a County-wide umbrella for IT services and equipment, including cyber-security
- IV. Look at opportunities to build on the existing successful County-wide model of joint purchasing of employee benefits
- V. Continue regional approach to labour force attraction and development,
- VI. Look at joint upgrading of recycling and composting programs
- VII. Examine long-term potential of a joint policing contract among southern Bruce municipalities
- VIII. Examine long-term potential for managing water treatment jointly with nearby municipalities

Veolia contract expires in 2026; Add to Action Plan- explore options related to contracting Water/wastewater services

3.C Staff Retention

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Update our Human Resource policies, with a focus on employee retention and attraction
- II. Review and expand our policy on Working Remotely
- III. Continue to create new levels of responsibility/opportunity within the organizational structure, along the lines of the “Junior Deputy” Clerk and “Junior Deputy” Treasurer positions
- IV. Continue with supporting staff development opportunities via special projects and assignment and mentorship opportunities.
- V. Develop a statement of the corporate values of the Corporation as an employer
- VI. Acknowledge jobs well done as part of staff performance management program
- VII. Institute a practice of offering interviews to existing staff for vacant positions being filled

4. FORWARD-LOOKING GOVERNMENT

4. A. Ensuring adequate Council attention to strategic and long-term issues

4.B. Planning for the growth-related impacts on municipal infrastructure

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Plan for additional open space and connectivity of parks and trails in future development areas through Master Recreation Plan process
- II. Plan for the additional capacity in recreation and sport facilities required for the anticipated population
- III. Develop amenities in the hamlets that will improve their appeal for new development
- IV. Prepare a development charges study to identify potential legally-permissible charges for growth-related infrastructure costs, recognizing that Council retains the right to decide how much of the permissible amount it will charge, and for what types of growth-related infrastructure it will charge, if any.
- V. Similarly, consider preparing a community benefits study
- VI. Implement a growth management study to look at projections and areas for future residential expansion

4. C. Planning for the future number and specialization of staff to meet the demands from growth

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Long-term plan for expanding staff capacity to meet demand generated by growth, with an associated financial plan
- II. Look at staffing trends in other Municipalities with past growth similar to our future growth
- III. Build public awareness of the service demands being experienced or predicted

5. RESPONSIBLE TRUSTEES OF MUNICIPAL ASSETS

5. A. Continuing to inventory the capacity and condition of existing assets/infrastructure; develop a long-term capital plan and financial plan for managing existing infrastructure; base annual capital workplan on the long-term asset management plan

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Complete water and wastewater capacity study
- II. Complete a condition-based plan for vehicle and equipment assets
- III. Determine a plan for the existing arena
- IV. Determine a long-term plan for rural bridges
- V. Follow Roads Needs Study to ensure timely renewal
- VI. Follow Master Recreation Plan once complete

5.B. Long-term Asset Management Financial Implementation Plan

Potential 2021-2025 Action Items

- I. Prepare and present for Council adoption a 20-year financial plan to implement the Asset Management Plan (existing assets), specifying the
 - planned use and timing of additions and withdrawals from reserves,
 - planned use and timing of debt financing and repayment,
 - planned reliance on conditional funding such as grants and community fund-raising, and
 - planned acceptance of unfunded depreciation
 - as well as the projected impact on local taxes and rates over the 20-year period

- II. Develop a financial implementation plan for the planned expansion of infrastructure capacity, the demand for which is generated exclusively by residential growth
- III. In the annual budget presentation, show a specific annual budget, year-end financial statement, and annual status report, for specific planned major projects (e.g., arena/community centre, East Ridge business park, rural bridges), based on the long-term financial plan
- IV. Ensure that future detailed infrastructure development plans (e.g., Parks/Rec/Culture Master Plan, Landfill Plan) are consistent with the Council-approved Financial Implementation Plan and vice-versa
- V. Be transparent to the public about the condition of existing infrastructure, the anticipated growth in population, the impact of growth on infrastructure, and the financial choices that result