

## Report to Council

<b>Report Title:</b>	Community Development Coordinator Update – July 2021		
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator		
<b>Department:</b>	Economic Development		
<b>Date:</b>	July 13, 2021		
<b>Report Number:</b>	ED2021-05	<b>File Number:</b>	C11ED
<b>Attachments:</b>	Press Release – Saugeen Student Start-up Program (SSUP), Reopen Walkerton Poster		

### Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number ED2021-05 – Community Development Coordinator Update – July 2021, prepared by Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator for information purposes.

### Report:

#### Background:

The Community Development Coordinator submits regular reports to Council to keep it abreast of activities related to community and economic development. The Municipality of Brockton has been involved in the following initiatives over the past three months:

- Reopening Walkerton Event
- Saugeen Student Start-up Program (SSUP)
- Grants for Signage and Façade Improvements
- Durham Street Park subcommittee
- Employer Recruitment Initiatives and Immigration Partnership
- Brockton Strategic Action Plan
- Development Inquiries
- New Businesses
- Marketing - Business Views Magazine
- Visitor Services
- Cargill Developments
- Walkerton Clean Water Legacy Fund

## **Analysis:**

### **Reopening Walkerton Event**

Staff are working to support the Walkerton BIA's "Reopening Walkerton" event on Friday, July 16<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (see attached). This event now perfectly coincides with the Province's actual Stage 3 re-opening on July 16<sup>th</sup>. We are contributing approx. \$2,000 to radio advertising, bottled water, and Walkerton dollars, which will be raffled as draw prizes during the event and music. We are also providing tents (set up and take down), garbage and recycling bin, picnic tables, and staff assistance through the Community Development Coordinator, CAO, By-law Enforcement, Operations and Parks and Recreation Department.

We have invited the Nuclear Innovation Institute's Explore program to attend, offering free science-based activities for kids and families. We are also offering space to our young entrepreneurs participating in the Saugeen Student Start-up Program (SSUP) this year. Picnic tables will be placed near restaurants, to encourage attendees to order take-out.

All staff and councillors are encouraged to attend this event to help support our local businesses as they recover from the prolonged effects of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions. Anyone wishing to volunteer at the cupcake table, or other duties as assigned, please let me know!

### **Saugeen Student Start-up Program (SSUP)**

Ten Brockton students have launched their own businesses this summer through the SSUP program offered by Saugeen Connects -- comprised of six municipalities including Brockton, plus the Saugeen Economic Development Corp. Congratulations to Avery Filsinger, Cooper Turner, Dakota Hall, Domenic Valeriote, Kody Kanter, Lauren Rower, Lukas Grove, Peyton Young, Brooklyn Metcalfe and Ryleigh Zettler.

Their ventures range from selling clay sculptures, homemade greeting cards, free-range pork, spa kits and custom wood products to offering babysitting and lawn care services, and running a rural concession stand.

The students will receive professional online training in financial literacy, media and marketing, customer service, problem-solving and communication, and "how to make \$1,000 on YouTube."

The program is funded through private and public sponsorships, and Brockton is grateful for contributions from the Walkerton Rotary Club and the County of Bruce this year. We will feature each of these enterprising students through social media posts over the next few weeks.

### **Brockton Façade Improvement Program**

The Municipality has approved 3 façade improvement grants to date, for signage for A Delicate Edge and Essential Wellness, and brick work and painting for 206 Durham Street. Staff also assisted two other businesses (Marlin Travel and A&R Music) with their applications in pursuing grants through the County's Spruce the Bruce program, which this year offered 100% funding for approved projects from businesses that had not received STB funding last year.

We also reached out to the owners of the Hillside Motel related to Spruce the Bruce grants available and have discussed plans to remove their aging neon sign.

## **Employment Initiatives**

Brockton is a member of the newly formed Grey-Bruce Local Immigration Partnership Council (BGLIP) and its Employment subcommittee, which is working on two key objectives:

- **Create opportunities for employers to come together and share best practices in how to attract and retain newcomers and how to create an inclusive workplace**
- **Develop a region-wide mentorship program that enables local citizens to support newcomers along their employment journey.**

The group is considering holding an employer symposium similar what Saugeen Connects offered in 2019, sharing best practices, challenges and success stories. This will likely take place during Newcomer Week, from September 9-18<sup>th</sup>. Municipalities and groups are encouraged to promote activities and points of connection for newcomers during that period.

Employment challenges were also discussed during Brockton's Strategic Action Plan focus groups, particularly with manufacturers and agribusinesses, and welcoming skilled newcomers will likely form part of the solution.

The CDC took part in a virtual employer hiring event on June 29<sup>th</sup> with Larsen and Shaw and West Bros. Ltd. of Hanover, speaking to several dozen people from the GTA, recruited through the Newcomer Centre of Peel. Representatives from Grey and Bruce counties also took part, along with Hanover's economic development manager, and there was a great deal of interest in a range of positions with our local employer. The meeting served as a pilot project that was very successful in facilitating direct dialogue between employers and newcomers.

## **New Businesses**

Thirteen new business ventures have been launched in Brockton since the pandemic hit in March, 2020, and we are participating in a project through the Saugeen Economic Development Corp. that involves surveying these business owners to learn more about their needs and circumstances. The results of the surveys will be released next month.

We congratulate our newest businesses, Papa V's Pizza and Provision Hydroponics in Walkerton, and the Bruce County Bookstore, Mill Pond Gallery, and the Dam Ice Cream Bar in Cargill. Business recognitions for all of these will take place in the next two weeks.

Congratulations as well to Marvin Freiburger and Sons Truck and Trailer Repairs, which celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary recently.

## **Visitor Services**

We have created a Visitor Information kiosk at the Lobies Park Campground, and held a visitor services training session for Parks and Recreation summer staff prior to the July long weekend. Online training through RTO7 was also provided, and summer staff are tracking all visitors.

Separate training sessions were scheduled for students working in Cargill at the Margaret's Mercantile shop and the newly opened Visitor and Interpretation Centre to support positive promotions of Brockton's activities and assets.

All tourism material previously at the Walkerton BIA office has been transferred to these new facilities. Maps and guides have also been distributed to local accommodators. Our tourism messaging is consistent with directives from the province and the county's Explore the Bruce program.

### **Cargill Update**

The Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional Committee has transformed a former auto shop into the new Margaret's Mercantile, which is open Wednesday to Sunday until Labour Day and features the work of over 40 local crafters. Their replica "dinky train" is up and running, with COVID-19 distancing in place, but there will not be any swamp tours this year. The committee has hired a student to assist with the train, store, research and interpretation.

The group has also commissioned a bright new mural from Walkerton artist Steve Mackie, partially funded by OPG and Young Farms. You'll find it on the east side of a former grocery store on Cargill Road. There will be an official "unveiling" on Thursday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. that staff and Council are invited to attend.

Meantime, Kevin McKague has opened several new businesses across the street – an art gallery, bookstore, visitor centre and ice cream stand. These too are open every Wednesday to Sunday, making this tiny hamlet a happening place this summer!

The CDC remains involved with new business inquiries (particularly with the East Ridge Business Park), marketing initiatives (including a feature article with Business Views Magazine), the Durham Street Park sub-committee, and the Brockton strategic action plan project, organizing four focus groups pertaining to economic development. The Walkerton Clean Water Legacy Award, covered in a separate report, was also fulfilled in this quarter.

### **Sustainability Checklist:**

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| • Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy?       | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity?     | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity?           | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity?                 | Yes |

### **Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:**

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

**Reviewed By:**



**Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer**

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**Respectfully Submitted by:**



**Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator**

**Reviewed By:**



**Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer**