

Report to Council

Report Title:	Community Development Coordinator Update June 2023		
Prepared By:	Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator		
Department:	Economic Development		
Date:	June 6, 2023		
Report Number:	ED2023-03	File Number:	C11ED
Attachments:	Market Garden Opening – Save the Date Hawks Nest Media Release		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number ED2023-03 - Community Development Coordinator Update June 2023, prepared by Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator for information purposes.

Report:

Background:

The Community Development Coordinator provides regular updates to Brockton Council to inform on activities relating to community and economic development. This report touches on the following:

- Business Improvement Grants
- Market Garden Project – Fundraising and Grand Opening
- Walkerton Summer Streetfest 2023
- Tourism Updates
- Hawks Nest 2023
- Walkerton Clean Water Legacy Award
- Digital Main Street
- Business Recognitions & New Developments
- Saugeen Connects
- Signage: East Ridge Industrial Park

The CDC also attended the South Bruce Nuclear Exploration Forum in Teeswater in May, and is assisting with economic considerations related to the County's Durham Street Bridge Project, attending the public meeting May 11th and following up with businesses and County staff.

Analysis:

Business Improvement Grants

The Municipality of Brockton expanded its business improvement grant program this year to include financial support for business signage and façade improvements (within downtown areas), accessibility, energy efficiency, conversion of vacant or underused buildings, and farm-gate operations in rural areas.

The CDC oversees the program, and all applications are reviewed by the CAO, Sonya Watson, and two councillors, Kym Hutcheon and Mitch Clark.

We have received 7 applications to date for 2023, and have approved 6, as follows:

Grant Program	Location	Project Undertaken	Value of Work	Grant Approved
Façade	Cargill	Painting, heritage feature restoration	\$10,000	\$3,000
Signage	Walkerton	Sign for new location	\$1,570	\$785
Signage	Walkerton	Sign, new business	\$860	\$430
Accessibility	Former Greenock	Accessible entrance to new greenhouse	\$5,368	\$2000
Accessibility	Walkerton	Automatic door opener - entrance	\$3,791	\$1,896
Accessibility	Cargill	New ramp for entrance	\$11,500	\$2,000

The total value of the business improvements is approximately \$33,090, with the Municipality investing \$10,111 through our Business Improvement Program. We have one application outstanding, and are expecting more to come. There is also a major project from 2022 that is still continuing.

This year's budget for business improvement grants is \$25,000.

Market Garden Fundraising and Opening

Our Market Garden park project is nearing completion and the CDC has been involved in fundraising efforts and plans for an official opening July 12th, as well as overseeing interpretive plaques and a video to accompany them, which will pay tribute to the Wong family and their contributions to Walkerton. Wightman Communications has graciously offered to film the video, featuring Dan Wong's telling of his family's story.

More than \$235,000 has been raised for the new park, with contributions from 44 individuals, families, service clubs and businesses, who will all be recognized on a donor plaque to be erected at the park entrance. It will be unveiled at the opening in July. We also received funding from FedDev Ontario, My Main Street, and Bruce County (through Spruce the Bruce) through grant applications the CDC prepared as part of the \$235,000 raised. A proposed contribution from the Walkerton BIA is also included in this amount.

The park's official opening will take place from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 12th. All members of Council are invited, along with members of the park's ad hoc committee (formerly the Durham Street Park Committee), donors, contractors involved in the project, and the public.

The park will be a focal point of this year's Walkerton Summer Streetfest, taking place on July 21st from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with free entertainment and activities for children and families. The event will help draw people to the downtown, where merchants will be offering shopping and dining specials. Rather than closing Colborne Street to traffic, as we did last year, we will be using the Market Garden space for the festival. (Durham Street will remain open).

Brockton's "Music in the Park" concert in August will also be held in the Market Garden.

Tourism Updates

Brockton's Visitor Information Centre in Lobies Park opened May 19th, and summer hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Staff attended the annual Grey Bruce Tourism Brochure swap in Owen Sound, handing out close to 1,000 of our Brockton maps and 2023 events listings, which also include information about dining, accommodations and shopping in Walkerton and area. The municipality is featured in the Escape to Grey Bruce tourism magazine this year, and staff assisted with stories, event listings and photos for the Brockton Visitor Guide as well, published by the Walkerton Herald Times.

Staff have been distributing maps and visitor information to our accommodators, attractions and tourism-based businesses, and are updating events and content on our tourism website, VisitWalkerton.com. Our visitor centre staff will be attending several events this summer to capture video and photos, and offer visitor information. Bruce County is conducting an online visitor survey this summer, which Brockton staff will be promoting, as information particular to Brockton will be shared with the Municipality.

Hawk's Nest

After several cancellations due to COVID-19, the Hawk's Nest event made a comeback this year, with business start-ups vying for cash from local angel investors ("hawks"). The Dragon's Den style event was held in Owen Sound, and Mayor Peabody and staff attended on behalf of the Municipality, which was a sponsor.

Unfortunately, no Brockton businesses made it to the finals, although some did enter the contest. The event happens every two years, and is organized by our local Community Futures Development Corporations. The media release is attached.

Walkerton Clean Water Legacy Award

This year's clean water legacy award has attracted about half a dozen applicants, and our panel will be reviewing submissions soon. Watch for an announcement by late June. The award honours the memory of those who suffered during the Walkerton water crisis and supports local students pursuing careers in environmental science or clean water management. Two students have received grants since this award was created in 2020. Donations to the Walkerton Clean Water Legacy Fund are invested in perpetuity through Community Foundation Grey Bruce, a registered charity.

Digital Main Street

Digital Main Street (DMS) is a free program offered by the provincial government to assist businesses with digital marketing, accounting, e-commerce and other processes. Brockton is one of several local municipalities sharing a “Digital Service Squad Specialist,” Will LeGrand, who has worked one-on-one with many businesses in Brockton.

Twelve local businesses have received Digital Transformation Grants, worth a total of \$30,000, through his assistance, and several others have completed digital training but not applied for funding. The digital services are available to all Brockton businesses until the end of July. The CDC has assisted in making connections between the businesses and the DMS program, which launched during COVID-19 with the rise of e-commerce.

Business Recognitions and New Developments

The Municipality recognized several new or expanding businesses recently, promoting them through social media:

- United Rentals (expansion into the East Ridge Business Park)
- Beautiful Ambitions (new business in Walkerton)
- Momma B’s Consignment (new space on Durham Street in Walkerton)
- RMP Welding (expansion into the East Ridge Business Park)

We are looking forward to also celebrating two new businesses, Tee & Co. in Walkerton, and Next Level Drilling in the Walkerton Industrial Park.

Wilfred McIntee & Co. Ltd. is celebrating 70 years in business this year, and Victor Lair Jewelers is marking its 60th anniversary!

Watch for new businesses advertising on the East Ridge Business Park sign in the near future as well.

Saugeen Connects

This year’s Saugeen Student Start Up Program (SSUP) is underway, with a record number of students -- over 70 -- applying to launch their own businesses and receive free training in marketing, accounting and business fundamentals. Brockton is helping with the program and will be offering students space during the Streetfest event, and at the Christmas Market (as in previous years).

Saugeen Connects, through its women in business initiative (WOWSA), also held a wellness day at the Saugeen Municipal Airport on May 27th, which was well attended.

The economic development group is continuing with its workforce project, which a local manufacturer is participating in, and continues to offer succession planning services.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

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

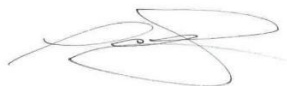
- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community | Yes |

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance | N/A |

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

Respectfully Submitted by:



Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer