

Report to Council

Report Title: Community Development Coordinator Update – September 2023

Prepared By: Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator

Department: Economic Development

Date: September 26, 2023

Report Number: ED2023-05 **File Number:** C11ED

Attachments: Job Fair 2023 – Employer Poster,
Indian Cultural Event Poster,
Walkerton Clean Water Legacy Award Media Release

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number ED2023-05 - Community Development Coordinator Update – September 2023, prepared by Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator for information purposes.

Report:

Background:

Brockton's Community Development Coordinator (CDC) provides regular updates to Council about matters pertaining to community and economic development. The CDC has been working on the following initiatives in recent months:

- Brockton Regional Job Fair
- Walkerton bridge replacement project
- Walkerton Hometown Christmas Market
- Indian Cultural Event
- Market Garden - Grand Opening
- Walkerton Summer Streetfest 2023
- Walkerton Clean Water Legacy Award
- Summer Tourism
- Business Recognitions
- Saugeen Student Start-Up Program (SSUP)
- Welcoming Week Grey Bruce
- SMA Visioning Session
- WOWSA Women's Wellness Tour

- Community improvement program - business grants
- Plans for Marketing the East Ridge Business Park

Analysis:

Brockton Regional Job Fair 2023

The Municipality is hosting a regional job fair on Wednesday, Oct. 18th at Walkerton District Community School for employers, job seekers, and students interested in learning about career opportunities close to home. The event will be open to the public from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., and to students only from 1-4 p.m.

We are partnering with many organizations to make this happen, including staff at WDCS and local school boards, Bruce County, VPI Working Solutions, YMCA Employment Services, the Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium, OYAP, GBLIP, Georgian College, Fanshawe College, and surrounding municipalities (Arran-Elderslie in particular).

Bruce County is contributing up to \$1,000 to offset costs, considering this a pilot funding model, and WDCS is liaising with other schools in the region (Hanover, Kincardine, and Sacred Heart in Walkerton) to arrange for students to attend. Several major employers are already planning to set up booths, including Larsen & Shaw, Price Schonstrum, Hammond Power, the Best Western Plus, the public-school board and Brockton will also have a table. The event is free for employers to attend, and a light meal will be provided.

We're very excited to be hosting this, to help meet employment needs in our community and as supporting initiative requested by our local employers.

Walkerton Bridge Rehabilitation Project

The CDC has been assisting in development of the Business Viability Committee and its terms of reference for the Durham Street Bridge Project in Walkerton. We will be sharing communications on an ongoing basis to ensure the business community feels involved as new information becomes available. The deadline for submissions for people wishing to be part of the committee is September 28th, 2023.

Walkerton Hometown Christmas Market

This year's Christmas Market will take place on Thursday, Dec. 16th from 5-9 p.m., with Durham Street closed to traffic and most artisans and other vendors set up in the new Market Garden Park. The licensed outdoor "Reindeer Room" will return, once again organized by the Walkerton Rotary Club, and it will be located on Colborne Street South, between the library and Godfather's Pizza.

New lights are being purchased for trees in the Market Garden and along Durham Street, and we are hoping to have carollers. A group of business owners has been involved in the planning, including the "Shop Walkerton & Win" campaign, which the Municipality is taking over this year.

We are currently advertising for vendors, and charging \$50 for booths this year. Insurance coverage has been arranged for the event as a whole, allowing individual vendors who don't have their own liability insurance to purchase insurance through the Municipality.

Indian Cultural Event

The owners of Buddha Restaurant in Walkerton, through Samiana Ethnic Productions, are organizing a free cultural event with traditional dance and live music at Walkerton District Secondary School on Saturday, Oct. 14th starting at 6:30 p.m. The “Dandiya” event is being supported by the Municipality and the County of Bruce. Please view the attached poster for details. All members of Council and the public are invited to attend.

Market Garden Opening

The Municipality held a successful grand opening of the Market Garden Park on July 12th with approximately 60 people in attendance, including several members of the Wong family, who originally owned the property. They were pleased with the heritage plaques commemorating their parents’ legacy and the Golden Wheel Restaurant that was a pillar of the business community in downtown Walkerton for many years.

Market Garden donors and funders were also recognized; over \$235,000 was raised from residents, businesses and various levels of government to offset the costs of the park.

Wightman Communications filmed the opening, and an interview with Dan Wong as well. The video is on our website at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ini7oanPUYQ>.

Walkerton Summer Streetfest 2023

This year’s Streetfest on July 21st was a success, particularly the array of family-based activities and performances offered in the Market Garden Park, which drew crowds all day. Activities ranged from crafts, music making, dance, stories, clowning and learning about First Nations culture to kids Zumba, yoga, and more! Community groups were welcome where they offered an activity.

We did not close Durham Street off to traffic this year, and some people felt it detracted from the festive atmosphere. On the other hand, keeping the street open allowed traffic to flow and required less staff. Accessibility was also factored in, and we had a volunteer to help ensure the sidewalks remained clear.

Many business owners reported strong sales, and all are keen to continue the tradition.

Walkerton Clean Water Legacy Award

Katelynn Lavergne was the winner of this year’s Walkerton Clean Water Legacy Award, the third since its inception on the 20th anniversary of the water crisis. The Owen Sound resident is studying environmental sciences at the University of Guelph, and toured the Walkerton Clean Water Centre the same day that she accepted the award and \$1,500 bursary.

The program has been a success and has helped move the needle on improving our image as a “clean water” community committed to environmental integrity, and fostering young ambassadors pursuing environmental science and clean water management. The Clean Water Legacy Award contributions are managed by Community Foundation Grey Bruce through a pooled endowment fund, and the award is based on returns from that investment. Donors have included the Municipality, the Walkerton Rotary Club, the Walkerton Clean Water Centre, Veolia, and private individuals.

Summer Tourism

The Municipality ran a tourism information booth from the Lobies Park Campground until the end of August, with one full-time student answering queries, updating the tourism website (VisitWalkerton.com), creating social media posts and monthly events bulletins. She also assisted Recreation staff with campground duties, booking and event postings. The Visitor Information student attended several events and took photos, assisting with the Summer Streetfest and Market Garden opening events as well.

Brockton also participated in Bruce County’s tourism survey, which is ongoing until November and includes an online questionnaire about their activities in the region. Seventeen surveys have been completed for Brockton so far, although they were given to every camper at Lobies.

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:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sonya Watson', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer