

Report to Council

Report Title:	Memorandum of Understanding – Saugeen Connects		
Prepared By:	Christine Brandt, Community Development Coordinator		
Department:	Economic Development		
Date:	February 25, 2025		
Report Number:	ED2025-02	File Number:	C11EC, L04SA
Attachments:	Saugeen Connects agreement		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby approves Report Number ED2025-02 - Memorandum of Understanding – Saugeen Connects, prepared by Christine Brandt, Community Development Coordinator, and in doing so approves a By-Law coming forward entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with Saugeen Connects, authorizing the CAO to signing the agreement for the 2025 calendar year.

Report:

Background:

The Municipality of Brockton has been an active member of Saugeen Connects for several years, collaborating with five other partners: the Saugeen Economic Development Corporation, the Municipalities of South Bruce and West Grey, and the Towns of Hanover and Minto. The mission of Saugeen Connects is to foster economic growth, support youth retention and development, promote business growth and retention, and attract immigrants to the area as residents, workers, entrepreneurs, and investors.

Saugeen Connects focuses on four key pillars: succession planning, workforce development, youth, and women. The organization runs several annual programs and events under these pillars, such as the Student Start Up Program (SSUP), the Advancing Women Economically (AWE) webinar series, an International Women’s Day event, and the Women of Welling Saugeen Area (WOWSA) program with its monthly networking sessions. Brockton’s Community Development Coordinator plays a vital role in attending monthly Saugeen Connects meetings, contributing to the development and promotion of these projects, and representing the Municipality at regional events.

Over the past several years, Brockton residents, particularly youth and women, have benefited from the programs and events offered by Saugeen Connects. However, participation is limited to residents of partner municipalities, with those from non-partner areas excluded from these opportunities.

Analysis:

Saugeen Connects has developed an updated Memorandum of Understanding for all partnering organizations to review and sign. This MOU specifies the roles and responsibilities of all partners, the annual financial commitment and a termination clause if any partner wishes to cease its affiliation with Saugeen Connects.

The recent exit of a municipality highlighted the importance of having a termination clause in the MOU, as it necessitated revisions to promotional materials and could have impacted on the continuity of the organization’s programs and initiatives. In a situation like this, an MOU serves not only as a legal document, but also as a strategic tool to maintain clarity and flexibility as regional dynamics change.

Saugeen Connects continues to be a valuable platform for fostering economic development and community engagement across Brockton and its partner municipalities. The updated MOU is crucial for adapting to changes in the partnership, ensuring that Brockton remains well-positioned to support its residents through the programs and initiatives offered by the organization.

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

\$5,000 included in the 2025 Budget

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Christine Brandt, Community Development Coordinator

Reviewed By:

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

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer