

Report to Council

Report Title:	Community Development Coordinator Report – March 2019		
Prepared By:	Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator		
Department:	Economic Development		
Date:	March 26, 2019		
Report Number:	ED2019-02	File Number:	C11ED
Attachments:	Saugeen SSUP Program, Mayor's Breakfast Report		

Recommendation:

That the Municipality of Brockton Council hereby receive Report Number ED2019-02 - Community Development Coordinator Report – March 2019, prepared by Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator for information purposes.

Report:

Background:

The Community Development Coordinator will be submitting quarterly reports to keep Council abreast of activities related to community and economic development. The Municipality of Brockton has been involved in the following initiatives during this new term of Council:

- Brockton Branding (Photos, Video, Banners, Community Guide)
- East Ridge Business Park
- Business to Bruce Toolkit Development
- Spruce the Bruce Community Projects
- Cargill and Greenock Swamp Tours
- Brockton Tourism Promotions
- Saugeen Municipal Airport
- Saugeen Connects – Youth, Succession Planning, Newcomer Attraction
- Business Retention and Attraction
- Mayor's Breakfast

Analysis:

Brockton Branding

We are in the final stages of completing our Brockton Branding Project, under the Rural Economic Development (RED) fund. Our new video is set to be released, promotional banners have been created for community events, our photo library is expanding, and a new Community Guide will be completed by May for potential residents, businesses and investors. The video will be embedded in our web site on the “New to Brockton” page, and promoted from the home page and “Do Business” pages. We will also launch a social media campaign around the theme “Come Home to Community.” The video will be presented at the Council meeting.

East Ridge Business Park

The Community Development Coordinator is supporting the Chief Administrative Officer in the development and promotion of industrial lands available. Our prices are currently very competitive, based on a scan of surrounding municipalities charging from \$25,000 an acre to well over \$50,000 an acre, some with additional development fees. However, with the servicing charges for expanding East Ridge the listing prices will need to be reviewed. The CAO will be bringing forward a report in April on the East Ridge Business Park. An enlarged LED sign for the business park is currently under way, with designs being finalized. “Land for Sale” signage is also being updated to incorporate Brockton’s new logo.

Business to Bruce Toolkit Development

Six professional videos have been developed by Bruce County and Brockton staff promoting “The New Flow of Business” in Walkerton. They feature local businesses such as The Guest House, Lee and Lynn, Fork ‘n Good Food, Kisses, Folmer’s Landscaping and Garden Centre, LE Studio Make and Take Workshop, the Walkerton Clean Water Centre and Larsen and Shaw. We are very pleased with the videos and our local business partners who worked with us through this process. The videos will be launched in the near future.

Spruce the Bruce Community Projects

Brockton’s Community Improvement Committee (CIC), which helps implement the Community Improvement Plan for Walkerton, has applied for a record number of grants this year from the Spruce the Bruce program. The Community Development Coordinator and other Brockton staff assisted with several grant applications. They include

- Storefront marketing kit to improve empty storefronts in Walkerton and promote opportunities for investors and entrepreneurs.
- Boat launch for Lobies Park
- New winter banners for downtown Walkerton
- New Coming Events Signs in Walkerton
- Walkerton branding on new downtown sidewalks
- New sign for the Walkerton arena
- Sculptural sign, shaped as a water drop, for the Optimist Park
- Canoe sculpture near the pavilion at the waterfront trail

Two other grant applications are in the works, but we have been advised that there may be a limit on the number of projects we can submit this year. Brian Folmer, Chair of CIC has been instrumental in working with staff on the grant applications.

Cargill and Greenock Swamp Tours

The Community Development Coordinator is working with the Cargill Swamp Tour Committee and Saugeen Valley Conservation on tourism initiatives for 2019. Five swamp tour dates have already been set (for May 4, May 11, July 13, August 17, and September 7), and there are plans to run a summer Visitor Centre again in the former post office. Additionally, the group is looking to create a new trail to a lookout point, add sculptural elements, new character cut-outs and commission a mural depicting the logging history of the town. It also plans to open a summer pop-up store, "Margaret's Mercantile," beside the Visitor Centre, featuring the work of local artisans and crafters. The store would operate as a co-operative, with artists overseeing the facility on a rotating basis. We are considering grant options to fund and promote these projects, including a possible Collaborative Marketing grant from Spruce the Bruce highlighting the participation of Walkerton and Paisley businesses in the Margaret's Mercantile project. Cargill itself is not eligible for Spruce the Bruce funding as it does not have a Community Improvement Plan.

Brockton Tourism Promotions

Municipal staff are working with the Walkerton Business Improvement Area (BIA) and Walkerton Herald-Times to produce the 2019 Brockton Visitor Guide, a 40-page publication to be distributed throughout the region. It will have a fresh look and feel, reflecting the new Brockton brand developed by the municipality in 2018. Our presence in the Escape to Grey Bruce magazine has expanded this year, with a two-page spread on Brockton and the Greenock Swamp tours. This magazine is distributed online, and has a print circulation of over 60,000 copies. Our tourism web site is being revamped! The municipality is in the process of entering into an agreement with Tourist Town, which manages numerous other tourism web sites in Bruce County such as Visit Wiarton, Visit Tobermory, Visit Southampton, Visit Kincardine, and Visit Sauble Beach. Its web platform is linked to Explore the Bruce, run by Bruce County. There will be no cost for us to participate. We will transfer much of our tourism content from Brockton's site (brockton.ca) and the BIA's site (visitwalkerton.ca), to the new one, which will be called visitwalkerton.com. Municipal staff and the BIA will remain involved in producing content for the new site, and will have access to the "back end" to update information as required. We plan to sign a memo of understanding with Tourist Town before the site is launched.

Saugeen Municipal Airport

The Saugeen Municipal Airport has a new manager, a new restaurant (The Last Hangar Cafe) and a new board intent on further developing the \$3-million regional asset with a new strategic plan and marketing. The Economic Development officers of Brockton, Hanover and West Grey are assisting in an advisory capacity, particularly with the marketing aspect. Councillors from all three municipalities will be invited to a special orientation event this spring.

Saugeen Connects – Youth, Succession Planning, Newcomer Attraction

Brockton is one of five municipalities involved in Saugeen Connects, a regional, cross-boundary working group formed under the Saugeen Economic Development Commission, which meets monthly. Current initiatives include:

- Saugeen SSUP, a student start-up program for youth in Grades 6-12 that want to run their own summer businesses (see attachment). We will introduce the program to local high schools in April; the deadline to apply is June 14, 2019. Students will receive \$200 in cash if their idea is accepted, and a \$100 bonus for following through. We are looking to raise \$1,500 in sponsorship from each municipality, through donations by businesses, community groups or government.
- Succession Matching program re-launch in June, 2019 to help connect businesses looking to sell with potential buyers. The online program is confidential, with enrolment “coupons” granted to businesses interested in succession planning and execution. Please let us know of any businesses that may be interested!
- We are planning an educational forum for businesses interested in employing newcomers, with a panel that will discuss immigration issues, housing, transportation, and successful integration into the community, featuring businesses that have travelled this road themselves.

Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction

Full employment throughout the region is making it tougher for local businesses to attract and retain workers, particularly with rising house prices, a tight rental market, and limited transportation options. Boomers are retiring and youth are keen to work, but in many cases, are moving away for training and education. Newcomers require support services and a welcome environment, if they're to stay and make Brockton home. The Community Development Coordinator attended several events and meetings related to business retention, labour force development and attainable housing on behalf of the Municipality, including

- Regional Job Fair in Owen Sound, where we represented 4 local employers and were accompanied by the Walkerton Clean Water Centre and Maple Court Retirement Home.
- Regional Labour Shortage Forum in Southampton, with the Four County Labour Board, OMAFRA, and others
- Attainable Housing Forum in Palmerston, with the CMHC, planners and developers
- Bruce and Grey's Agri-food BR&E Study – Presentation of Findings
- Walkerton BIA After-Five event at Flowers By Us
- Hanover Launch Pad meeting to discuss regional transportation of students to the programs, which offer youth the opportunity to try various trades
- Economic Development Council of Ontario Conference in Toronto, with seminars on Navigating the Cannabis Market and Legislation, Developments in Agribusiness, and more.
- Tour of Larsen and Shaw and meeting regarding funding opportunities.
- The CDC also invited Tina Rupert, regional manager of VPI, to speak to Brockton's Economic Development Committee about opportunities for employers and job seekers. Of particular interest is a grant program for private sector employers that covers employee training on new equipment.

- The CDC met with the Four County Labour Board regarding their Employer One surveys and the results of an employee survey.
- On March 29, 2019 we will be attending a Skilled Trades Forum in Walkerton

Mayor's Breakfast

Mayor Peabody held a public forum on February 12, 2019. A summary of the event is attached to this report, and will be posted on the Brockton website. There will be three Mayor's Breakfast events per year, in February, June and October. The next Mayor's Breakfast is scheduled for June 18, 2019 at the Best Western Hotel in Walkerton.

Inquiries

The Community Development Coordinator fields inquiries about economic development in Brockton. Over the past quarter these have included questions about office space in downtown Walkerton, promotion for new businesses, location suitability for a proposed arts venue, housing development and marketing information for a local business, and availability of rental accommodation.

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?
N/A

Respectfully Submitted by:



Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator

Reviewed By:



Chief Administrative Officer