



**Brockton Economic Development Committee
Minutes
Monday, December 14, 2020
Virtual Zoom Meeting
12 pm**

Voting Members

Dan Gieruszak – Chair	Present
Mayor Chris Peabody – Ex Officio	Absent
Dean Leifso – Councillor	Present
Kym Hutcheon – Councillor	Present
Laura Elliott/Jessie Bates – Business Improvement Area	Absent
Carl Kuhnke – Institutional Representative	Absent
Mike Dupuis – Agriculture Representative	Present
Matt Rapke – Public Member	Present

Staff

Sonya Watson – CAO	Present
Paulette Peirol – Community Development Coordinator/Sec.	Present

Advisory Members

Rose Austin – Saugeen Economic Development Corporation	Present
Tina Rupert – VPI Working Solutions	Present

Others Present

1. Call to Order/Attendance

The meeting was called to order by D. Gieruszak at 12:10 p.m.

2. Acceptance of the Agenda

Moved by M. Dupuis, Seconded by D. Leifso

That the agenda for the December 14, 2020 Brockton Economic Development Committee be approved as presented.

CARRIED

3. Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof.

4. Delegations

5. Passing of Minutes

5.1 Brockton Economic Development Committee Minutes, November 16, 2020

5.2 Business Arising from the Minutes

Moved by M. Dupuis, Seconded by M Rapke

That the minutes of the November 16, 2020 Brockton Economic Development Committee be approved as presented.

CARRIED

6. Business Items

6.1 Business Resurgence Program (see attachment, Business Resurgence Program Graphic)

R. Austin described this new program being run through the Saugeen Economic Development Corp., offering free training and consulting for local businesses worth up to \$6,000. EDC members were asked to help make businesses aware of this offering, particularly those needing advice rather than funding at this time. Space in each of the six programs is limited, she noted.

R. Austin also reported that Saugeen Connects was successful in its Rural Economic Development (RED) grant application for two programs running from January to March that will help address the needs of businesses considering succession planning and women in business.

The Advancing Women Economically (AWE) program is a 10-part webinar series teaching entrepreneurial and life skills to women.

The SUCCESSION Planning program will assist businesses in developing viable succession plans.

SEDC is still offering interest-free funding for rural businesses affected by COVID-19, available on a first-come first-served basis.

R. Austin left the meeting at 12:32 p.m.

6.2 Tourism Report (see attachments, Tourism 2021 Action Plan, and RTO7 Report – Tourism Action Plan for Brockton)

Referencing the written report, P. Peirol said that Brockton Council is supportive of the Municipality assuming responsibility for tourism, as the MOU with the Walkerton BIA covering tourism marketing and visitor services has ended. The proposed budget for 2021 is \$25,000, and includes two summer students working primarily in Cargill, in a building that has housed a Visitor Centre for the past two years. New ownership will mean a monthly rental charge of \$500 from May to September.

She said details of the full tourism plan, which involved input from the Regional Tourism Organization for Grey, Bruce and Simcoe counties, can be found in the attached report, which outlines initiatives for the next three years, including development of recreational opportunities on the Saugeen River.

M. Dupuis asked about safety and signage on the river and the committee discussed this.

S. Watson, who is a member of the new river task force with Bruce County and other municipalities, said they are working collaboratively on safety issues including 911 services, and will only market areas of the river that are safe for the public to use.

Moved by D. Leifso, Seconded by M Rapke

That Brockton's Economic Development Committee accepts the report and budget recommendations outlined in the report Brockton 2021 Tourism Action Plan, by Community Development Coordinator Paulette Peirol, which incorporates Council's direction regarding support for the current Cargill tourism initiatives and builds on recommendations by RTO7 (Regional Tourism Organization 7, representing Bruce, Grey and Simcoe counties) in its analysis of our tourism strengths and opportunities.

CARRIED

6.3 Airport Update

D. Gieruszak confirmed the return of the Snowbirds in 2021 and hopes for a very successful and profitable show. The airport's general manager is also looking into zoning regulations for potential hangars with homes.

6.4 EDC Meetings for 2021 (Jan. 18, March 15, May 17, July 19, Sept. 20, Nov. 15)

Following Brockton's review of its committee structure, Economic Development meetings will be held every other month, or as needed at the call of the Chair. D. Gieruszak said this will provide an opportunity to have a more full agenda and more of a focus on strategic items.

EDC members supported the committee changes.

7. Business Recognitions

P. Peirol said 6 business recognitions planned for December will take place in the new year after the Christmas rush.

8. Reports

8.1 BIA Report

P. Peirol said the BIA will be presenting its new Strategic Plan at its AGM in January. The new plan focuses on downtown beautification and events.

8.2 Community Development Coordinator Report – Paulette Peirol (see attachment)

P. Peirol expanded on her written report, saying she attended a COVID-19 business webinar with Dr. Arra, medical officer of health, who noted it's safer to be at home than at work or school, as there has not been a single incidence of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace.

She also gave an update on Brockton's CIP project and the county's Plan the Bruce project, saying it would be prudent for the municipality to proceed with its CIP project as planned.

Moved by M. Rapke, Seconded by M. Dupuis,

That the Economic Development Committee accept the Community Development Coordinator's Report as presented.

CARRIED

9. Finance/Budget

9.1 2021 Budget - Economic Development

S. Watson said it's been a challenging year. The proposed Economic Development budget includes new funding for tourism, the CIP project, business awards and an \$10,000 increase in façade grant funding. The economic development budget has been reduced to make up for an increase in tourism.

She said the Ontario Energy Board is considering over 200 natural gas projects worth about \$130-million. Epcor's project for Brockton would serve 500 residents if approved. The company is asking for \$20-million. Details are available on the OEB website.

She said we are also budgeting to complete the Phase 2 expansion of the East Ridge Business Park, applying to FedDev Ontario for funding to cover 50% of the \$5-million cost.

There is also money to build a new ERBP sign in 2021.

Moved by D. Leifo, Seconded by M. Rapke

That the Economic Development Committee accept the 2021 budget report as presented.

CARRIED

10. New Business

10.1 Conservation

D. Gieruszak said he is involved with Bill 229 discussions with conservation authorities and Conservation Ontario with regards to changes in conservation policies. He will keep Council apprised of developments.

10.2 Agriculture

D. Gieruszak questioned whether money should be added to the Economic Development budget to assist agriculture. S. Watson said the CIP review may assist farmers, offering opportunities for farm-gate operations or other grants for agricultural businesses. Natural gas, if approved, will also assist farming operations.

M. Dupuis said COVID-19 has raised the issue of food security, which directly affects the local farming community. He said transporting hogs to Quebec for processing is very expensive, and processing facilities closer to Brockton would save money and increase food safety and security.

11. Adjournment

Moved by D. Leifso, Seconded by M. Dupuis,

That the Dec. 14, 2020 Economic Development Committee meeting adjourn at 1:10 p.m.

CARRIED

The next EDC meeting will be held at on Monday, January 18, 2020

At 12 Noon

Using the Zoom Platform

Background

RTO7 was approached by Paulette Peirol at the Municipality of Brockton looking for assistance for a Strategic Tourism Plan. The staff at RTO7 have extensive experience working on Strategic Tourism Plans and in the majority of circumstances, expensive plans are developed by consultants and there is little or no budget for implementation.

We feel that this is a big miss and there is a better approach. Documentation and research is certainly a key element as Municipalities determine the most responsible way to allocate budget, however, most of the time these expensive documents sit on the shelf. It's time to put the existing documents to work. By approaching tourism from this perspective, we feel that the \$40,000-\$50,000 Brockton might have spent on a plan can be used on implementing many of the recommendations that would have been included in that report.

RTO7 has prepared this document based on the work they have completed with the municipality over the last 3 years, recommendations that have been pulled from other plans and studies Brockton has completed and should be seen as a working Action Plan.

RTO7 Staff reviewed the following documents:

2011 Recreation and Leisure Master Plan	2017 Walkerton Community Official Plan
2013 Brockton Strategic Sustainability Plan	2018 BR + E
2016 Walkerton Toolkit	

RTO7 Staff have also had conversations with Paulette Peirol about the current budget, objectives and human resources (staff and volunteer), that are available to execute the objectives and goals in the Plan.

Three objectives with measurable goals will set out for 2021. A budget or staff time allocation will be assigned to the goal. We understand that this is a geographically large municipality with multiple stakeholders and limited resources to address everyone's needs. As RTO7 developed this Action Plan, we have taken all of these things into account and strategically determined what should be prioritized for 2021. There will be actions assigned to other partners and longer-term goals identified that will become the priority in 2022, 2023 and beyond. We believe that it is important to provide support for the initiatives that are gaining momentum organically and that match some of the priorities identified in some of the studies that the Municipality has already completed and adopted.

Traditionally, many municipalities believe that the solution to grow tourism rests with advertising. This is one critical piece of the puzzle, but not the first step. After working with the Cargill Citizens group and the Saugeen Valley Conversation Authority for the last three years, we believe that a lot of the product development work has already been done, but there is still more work on product development that needs to take place before a lot more money is invested in advertising.

Based on information provided in the Final Reports from RTO7's Tourism Implementation Program, and visitation, and a critical mass of product is growing in Cargill. Sales and visitation at Margaret's Mercantile, even during the COVID era, are increasing. The addition of the food stand was a terrific way to encourage people to return more than once. According to the 2018 BR + E study, 'Quality of Life' is a key factor when people decide to do business in Brockton. As indicated by the Walkerton Official Plan and Business to Bruce Toolkit, significant work is already underway in the Town of Walkerton. There is also some great work being started on the Saugeen River, which is a key tourism draw. It's important to keep the momentum going on all these projects, however limited resources will dictate that priorities need to be determined.

The Action Plan will outline some low cost or free advertising opportunities that leverage RTO7, Bruce County and Destination Ontario initiatives but the bulk of the budget will involve an additional staff to run an ambassador program and continue to refine and add new opportunities in the Village of Cargill. Recommendations will include tasks for various communities groups or committees that have an interest in those particular objectives. We have decided that Cargill should be the main focus for 2021 as a result of consultation with Brockton staff, the high level of engagement from the Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotions Association, the building success that the Village has seen over the last three years and the product/market match for limited budget that Brockton has for tourism. We think that fostering this type of momentum through a volunteer group could encourage other volunteer groups to do the same in the future. We also recognize that other groups such as the Walkerton BIA, the broader business community and many service clubs are already doing a lot of work that can be supported through some cooperative marketing or free opportunities. We believe that letting them build momentum is ideal for 2021 and Brockton can begin to provide additional financial support in 2022 and beyond.

Objectives

There are three broad categories that RTO7 feels can be completed in 2021:

- Product Development
- Communications and Education
- Infrastructure

We have also included items for 2021, 2022 and beyond that other parties could be tasked with. These are likely activities that these groups are already undertaking.

Although these groupings are broad, there will be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely goals that will accompany the various action items. Some will include a budget, while others will just require staff or volunteer resources.

Objective 1 – Product Development

Goal	Timeline	Person Responsible	Budget	Actions (KPI)	Rationale
1. Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional Association becomes a Not-For Profit	November 2020 initiate process	Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional Association with support from Municipality	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Registration is filed -Bylaws are written -Inaugural meeting is held 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can apply for grants and funding from Federal and Provincial Governments - NFP status increases the likelihood of funding approvals - Have the potential to hire a staff person instead of just relying on volunteers - Can help to create more stability
2. Confirm space in Cargill	January 2021	Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional Association	\$600/month -rent, utilities, May - September	-sign a lease or agreement with the building owner. 5 year term would be preferred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Need to ensure the space is secured to operate Margaret's Mercantile and the Visitor Centre -2 building format has worked well
3. Confirm "engine" and use of the train	January 2021	Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional Association	\$200/month July-August	-look for an agreement to lease an ATV, side-by-side or tractor to pull the train	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -This is a key attraction for young families to come to Cargill and since the train no longer operates in Port Elgin, this is a competitive advantage. -The committee should look at charging for this experience as a way to financial sustainability
4. Work with Margaret's Mercantile artists and crafters to	March – October 2021	Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional	Staff time \$1,000 advertising	-Number of workshops delivered	-Helps to create financial sustainability for the Cargill Citizen's group

develop workshops that can be offered throughout the spring, summer and early fall		Association Brockton Staff RTO7 Staff		-Number of workshop participants	-Showcases artists -Engages visitors and encourages them to return
5. Secure additional artists and crafters for Margaret's Mercantile	March – June 2021	Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional Association Brockton Staff	Staff time	-Number of artists	-Creates critical mass of local artisans -Space for home based businesses to sell craft merchandise at a retail location -Creates employment -supports creative culture of municipality
6. Redesign the Greenock Swamp tours in the COVID era	March – May 2021	Cargill Citizens Group SVCA Brockton Staff RTO7 Staff	Staff time \$2,300 for app	-Number of tours sold -Number of tours downloaded	-Bus tours are very difficult in the COVID era but the tours are still solid products -Redesign the tours so they're suitable for smaller groups that drive themselves -the app can be used as a self-guided map with stories narrated by local storytellers www.stgry.com is one option
7. Saugeen River improvements with the River Task Force	Year Round	Brockton Staff RTO7 Staff	Staff time	-Sign audit -updated River audit using BC Hughes 2013 format in the RTO7 Waterways study	-River is a mature asset that is already well known and well developed however there are continued improvements that need to be made -Promotion can be integrated into some partners campaigns like Bruce County and RTO7. -Although this item seems out of place, we want to acknowledge

					the work that is already being done
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Objective 2 – Communications and Education

Goal	Timeline	Person Responsible	Budget	Actions (KPI)	Rationale
1. Imagery and Video development	June – October 2021	Brockton staff RTO7 Staff	\$2,000 – Leverage RTO7 Video/Image development Partnership Program	-apply for RTO7s Imagery and Video Development Partnership Program -Collect images of Cargill activities	-solid visual assets are required for any marketing campaign that’s in print or digital campaigns run with RTO7 and for the future
2. Orientation of Councillors and Economic Development team around the opportunities and benefits of tourism	June 2021	RTO7 Staff	Staff time	-Workshop with members of Economic Development committee, Municipal Council and key staff	-Tourism is an important part of any economic development strategy, especially when looking to recruit people to move to the area -There could be knowledge gaps with some of these key decision makers
3. Ambassador Program	March – October	Brockton Staff BIA Chamber of Commerce Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional Association Local Real Estate Offices	\$10,500 (\$20/hr x 35 hrs/week x 15)	-hire 1 person to promote the various areas of the municipality as a “mobile visitor centre”. -Duties could include working with Chamber of Commerce and BIA to	-A single physical information centre doesn’t reach the majority of visitors as many now just search on their phones -Work more closely with sources where visitors are already seeking information -Lead Ambassador (Paid staff) will work with all these groups to share information with volunteer

				<p>inform businesses on what's happening locally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -work with BIA to do a "downtown FAM" so businesses understand the opportunity and feel comfortable passing customers along -Weekly email to key Ambassadors to share what's happening and highlight different activities 	<p>ambassadors and businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Communications of events and opportunities was identified in the BR +E
4. Advertising	July-August	<p>RTO7 Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional Association BIA Chamber Brockton Staff</p>	<p>\$3,000 Leverage RTO7's TIP program or Video/Image Advertising Program to turn \$3,000 into a \$9,000 campaign</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Using video/images developed through RTO7s Partnership Program, work with RTO7 staff to launch Facebook campaigns for Cargill, Downtown Festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TIP does not require additional cash -Opportunity to create a cooperative marketing campaign through the Video/Image Advertising Partnership Program -Leverage programs available from Destination Ontario -Leverage Spruce the Bruce funds
5. Tourist Town Website	Year-round	Brockton Staff	\$4,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -upgrade the Tourist Town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fewer staff resources are required than if

				website to obtain analytics and add websites to businesses listed on the website already -Establish timeframes and deliverables for Tourist Town with penalties for non-delivery	deciding to build a new website -Will gain access to useful analytics to make decision about the future of a tourism website
6. Storytelling	May – September 2021	Local Artists Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotions Association Brockton Staff	\$1,500 This budget can be leveraged through RTO7's Storytelling Partnership Program	-Number of stories produced	-Determine which artists, activities or attractions should be featured -Opportunity to leverage another one of RTO7s programs -Allows artists and attractions to tell their story which encourages them to be part of the solution

Objective 3 - Infrastructure

Goal	Timeline	Person Responsible	Budget	Actions (KPI)	Rationale
1. 911 signs between the access points on the Saugeen River	Q3 2021/2022	Brockton Staff County of Bruce	Could be an opportunity to leverage through RTO7's wayfinding program and/or	Number of signs installed	-Safety along the river has been a concern from the River group

			Spruce the Bruce's destination infrastructure		
2. Cargill Artwork	Spring 2021	Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotions Association	\$2,400	Number of new art pieces installed	-Helps to continue to tell the story of Cargill -Beautification of the Village

Other Items – 2022 and beyond

Goal	Timeline	Person Responsible	Budget	Actions (KPI)	Rationale
1. River Development	2022	Brockton Staff RTO7 SVCA Bruce County Other municipalities along the river	Work to promote fishing and paddling along the river. Background information can be collected in 2021 with implementation in 2022	-Number of guides promoting and fishing along the river -Number of boats that use the river -Develop a Google Map or app for padding along the River	-Safety along the river has been a concern from the River group -Flyfishing and paddling are important activities along the river but there are other activities that have more momentum so resources should be focused there to start -Digital map would help alleviate some of the safety concerns along the river
2. Downtown Businesses	2021	BIA Business Owners RTO7 Bruce County	TBD \$5000 funded through the BIA and businesses	-develop a cooperative marketing campaign	-continue to promote the businesses downtown Walkerton -Work with RTO7 and Spruce the Bruce to leverage Video/Image Advertising or Partnership Program -Downtown Walkerton is in good shape so additional funds from the municipality can be leveraged in other areas for 2021

3. Camping improvements at Lobbies Park	2022	Brockton Staff	TBD	-create a user survey for 2021 and implement the recommendations in 2022/23	-RTO7 was unable to locate any recent studies on campground improvements -This is a key tourism asset for the municipality and on-going improvements are required.
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Free Opportunities

Listing on BruceGreySimcoe.com

Listing on ExploretheBruce.com

Various programs and listings with Destination Ontario

Work with media and influencers coming to the region

Work with media and influencers who are in the region

Work with neighbouring municipalities to develop more activities for people to do in the area

Budget

Item	Amount	Leverage
Margaret's Mercantile – rent, utilities \$600/month for 5 months	\$3,000	
ATV for engine - \$200/month for 2 months	\$400	
Workshop Advertising	\$1,000	RTO7 FIP Program
Greenock Swamp App	\$2,300	
Imagery Development	\$2,000	RTO7 Video/Image Development Partnership Program
Brockton Ambassador	\$10,500	Canada Summer Jobs
General Advertising	\$3,000	RTO7 Tourism Implementation or Video/Image Advertising Partnership Programs, Spruce the Bruce
Website	\$4,200	
Cargill Artwork	\$2,400	Spruce the Bruce?
Storytelling	\$1,000	
Total	\$29,800	

Report to Economic Development Committee

Report Title: 2021 Tourism Action Plan
Prepared By: Paulette Peirol
Department: Economic Development
Date: December 11, 2020

Recommendation:

That Brockton's Economic Development Committee accept the recommendations outlined in the report Brockton 2021 Tourism Action Plan, by Community Development Coordinator Paulette Peirol, which incorporates Council's direction regarding support for the current Cargill tourism initiatives and builds on recommendations by RTO7 (Regional Tourism Organization 7, representing Bruce, Grey and Simcoe counties) in its analysis of our tourism strengths and opportunities.

Background:

The memorandum of understanding between the Municipality of Brockton and the Walkerton BIA for the provision of tourism services will end in 2021, with the Municipality assuming the role.

Meantime, the Cargill/Greenock Swamp Promotional Committee has incorporated as a non-profit group and will be operating independently of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority. It plans to continue running the popular Greenock Swamp tours, Margaret's Mercantile, dinky train and other activities in the historic hamlet.

Brockton Council is committed to supporting the Cargill initiatives, visitor services and promotion of our tourism assets through its economic development department. The Community Development Coordinator has worked with the Cargill group, Tourist Town, and RTO7 (which has helped fund the Cargill initiatives over the past three years) to develop a strategic action plan for tourism in 2021.

Kim Clarke, Tourism Experience Development Specialist with RTO7, greatly assisted through a review of our assets and priorities, recommending a clear focus on product development, communication and education (including an ambassador program, digital promotions and further website development) and infrastructure. A copy of her report is included.

Analysis:

The following outlines the proposed plan for tourism efforts in Brockton in 2020 and beyond. The Municipality's tourism efforts will be focused on promoting our assets, amenities and special events to the broader public to increase visitation and spending, supporting tourism-related businesses (including

accommodators, restaurants, food services, select retailers and tour operators) and the strategic development of key products.

Seasonal staff will be hired and trained to assist visitors and act as ambassadors to help promote festivals and events, outdoor recreation and niche activities such as the Greenock Swamp Tours, through the operation of a Visitor Information Centre, frequent contact with key partners, and use of communication channels such as digital media.

The cost of summer staff will be partially offset through grant programs such as Canada Summer Jobs and provincial funding for heritage and tourism positions.

The Visitor Centre will be located in Cargill, in the former bank, through a lease agreement with the new owner. The Municipality will cover rent at \$500 per month for five months, from May to October. The Visitor Centre will also function as an interpretation centre for historic Cargill, with the Cargill promotional committee assisting. It could also serve as a space for workshops by local artisans, through Margaret's Mercantile, from spring to fall.

In 2021 we will support efforts by the Cargill group to attract more vendors to Margaret's Mercantile, offer artisan workshops to further engage visitors, revamp the Greenock Swamp tours to accommodate Covid-19 (offering to smaller groups or possibly creating an app), secure an "engine" (ATV) for the dinky train, and possibly commission more heritage, interpretive art by local artist Steve Mackie.

Our tourism website, www.visitwalkerton.com, will be significantly enhanced through a new MOU with Tourist Town that will enable us to better promote Brockton businesses and attractions, and access real-time analytics. The cost is approximately \$4,200 a year.

We will no longer publish a Brockton Visitor Guide, but instead leverage funding from the province and county to create new digital content and marketing campaigns able to reach a much wider target audience. (We will, however, still advertise in the Escape to Grey-Bruce regional tourism magazine). RTO7 offers funding for imagery and video development, digital advertising, storytelling, experience development and tourism implementation programs. We have utilized these in the past and will continue to do so, particularly for the Cargill initiatives in 2020. More information is available at <https://rto7.ca/Public/Programs/Partnership-Program>.

Bruce County may also be a source of tourism funding, depending on its plans for Spruce the Bruce and other programs in 2021.

A Wayfinding Program is also available through RTO7 which could assist in 911 signage for the Saugeen River, and signage to the Greenock Swamp.

Education and communication is a foundation of our plan, and RTO7 has offered to discuss with Council, the Economic Development committee or other stakeholders some the key elements of a successful tourism program and benefits to the community and businesses, including investment attraction and population growth.

Future tourism growth opportunities exist on the Saugeen River and at Lobies Park. We aim to lay the foundation for these in 2021 through a user survey at the Lobies Park Campground, with implementation in 2022 and 2023. We will continue to work with the Saugeen River Task Force.

Staff will work closely with all stakeholders, including the Cargill-Greenock Swamp Promotional Committee, the SVCA, the Walkerton BIA, RTO7, Bruce County (Explore the Bruce), tourism businesses and property owners. There will also be an opportunity to work with the Saugeen Municipal Airport to promote the Snowbirds in 2021.

Summary of Significant Changes

- Brockton to directly oversee tourism
- Operate Visitor Information Centre in Cargill
- Hire and Supervise Seasonal Staff (students)
- Replace the print Visitor Guide with an enhanced tourism website and digital marketing
- New MOU with Tourist Town



Paulette Peirol
Community Development Coordinator