



Council Status Report

Report Number BED2015-02-01

Prepared by: Taralyn Martin, Business & Economic Officer

Date: 3 February 2015

Subject: 2014 Year End Report

File No. 500

Attachment: N/A

Recommendation:

For your information only.

Comments:

Below you will find a summary of projects that I worked on throughout 2014. We were fortunate enough to secure several grants to move revitalization and cultural development projects forward. I look forward to continuing work on many of these initiatives in 2015.

2014 Huron-Kinloss Discovery Guide

Over the course of the year, we distributed 6,000 copies of the Huron-Kinloss Guide across Southwestern Ontario. A few additions were made to the 2014 edition of the Guide to promote the Lakeshore area (Point Clark map) and highlight a Huron-Kinloss attraction (Bruce Botanical Food Gardens). This Guide remains a popular publication with residents and visitors alike, and next year we hope to order more copies as we ran out early this past year.

Business Attraction

The Township Website continues to be frequently updated with regards to available commercial properties. The Business Mix Analysis Maps for Lucknow and Ripley were updated twice last year and more properties were added to the Vacant Commercial Space page. We continue to promote Huron-Kinloss as an area that is "open for business" on Facebook and in print ads.

Business Retention and Expansion

Very few outstanding actions remain in the Business Retention and Expansion Report. I expect all actions will be addressed within the next few months. Several actions listed in this Report have become annual events/promotions including the Business Dinner and Networking Event and business workshops.

In May, Bernia Wheaton of Achieve Consulting Group was our guest speaker at the Business Dinner and Networking Event. She presented many ways that businesses can market themselves on a small budget. The feedback from the event was so positive that we invited Bernia back to the Township to run a hands-on workshop on Facebook for small businesses. The Facebook workshop was at full-





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capacity and a few business owners and community organization leaders have contacted Bernia for advice since then.

Communications

Facebook continues to be a great way to communicate information with residents and visitors. Our Township Page currently has 473 “likes”. This is an approximate 61.7% increase since February 2014.

New in 2014, were the Township e-newsletters. Rather than collecting e-mail addresses from business owners, those interested in receiving a Business Banner simply subscribe online. E-newsletters are also produced for monthly township news (HK Connects), quarterly recreation updates (Get Moving Huron-Kinloss) and quarterly Nuclear Waste Community Advisory Committee updates.

Cultural Action Plan

In the spring, the Township was awarded funding through the Cultural Development Fund to implement the Cultural Action Plan. We hired CoBalt Connects, who completed our Cultural Action Plan in 2013, to establish a Community Cultural Roundtable and lead cultural development in the Township for one year. The Roundtable, consisting of community organization leaders, business owners and community champions, met four times to share their ideas on how to strengthen the cultural sector of the municipality. Members of the Roundtable found this exercise to be beneficial to them because it allowed them to learn about what other groups were doing and the challenges they face. The Roundtable decided to move forward with three projects: an interactive community calendar; volunteer fair; and enhanced online cultural map. We will be enhancing the existing Township community calendar and cultural map based on feedback from the Roundtable. These projects will be completed by the end of March, 2015.

Jeremy Freiburger of CoBalt Connects has also been working individually with interested community organizations as part of the Cultural Development Fund. Jeremy and his team are currently guiding the Bruce Botanical Food Gardens through a strategic planning exercise. Jeremy is also assisting the Lucknow and District Kinsmen and Lucknow Writers Guild.

We also assisted the Ripley-Huron History Book Committee in obtaining a Trillium grant for the Families and Farms of Huron Township 2015 book. This grant allowed the History Book Committee to keep the cost of each book down and affordable.

Promotions

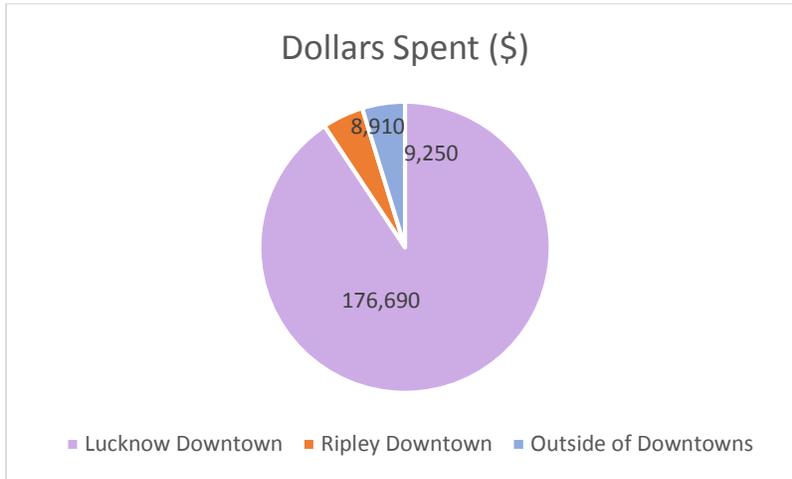
2014 Holiday Shopping Pass

This past year we received 1,299 completed Passes, which represents \$194,850 spent in our communities over the holiday season. Twenty-five additional Passes were submitted; however, they were incomplete. These numbers are similar to the 2013 Holiday Shopping Pass statistics, when we received 1,472 completed Passes.

In Lucknow, 22 downtown businesses participated in the promotion and 12 downtown businesses participated in Ripley. Pine River Cheese, and I.C. Greenhouses also participated. The diagram below shows the breakdown of where the dollars were spent.



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Business owners and customers look forward to this promotion each year and we would like to offer it again in 2015. This promotion has proven to be a great way to reward residents for shopping locally and encourage visitors to visit our shops and see what Huron-Kinloss has to offer.

2014 Huron-Kinloss Ice Cream Trail™

It was another successful year for the Ice Cream Trail™. We had 197 participants, which is the same number as last year. The theme was “Beach Party” and we received several creative photos and entries! Using this theme, we were able to highlight our two most popular beaches: Point Clark Beach and Boiler Beach.

This was the first year that we participated as an exhibitor at the Explore the Bruce Passport Launch Party. It was a great opportunity to promote the Ice Cream Trail™ and reach a new market of people looking to explore new areas. The new Ice Cream Trail™ magnetic photo frames were a big hit and we will be able to use them again to promote future Trails. We shared a common stop with the Passport (Holyrood General Store) and we had several people mention that they were doing both Trails.



We continue to receive great feedback from the business community regarding this initiative as it brings new customers to their stores. We look forward to highlighting the Point Clark Lighthouse and Ripley Reunion on the 2015 Ice Cream Trail™.

Secrets of the Back 40

We printed the “Secrets of the Back 40... A Farm Gate Experience” brochure in the fall of 2013 so this was the first year that brochures went out through the brochure swaps. The response was fantastic! We had several requests from Tourism Information Centres across Southwestern Ontario for more brochures and we are almost out of copies. Although it is difficult to measure the success at the farm gate level, several farmers listed on the brochure have reported an increase in traffic and sales.



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Although the Secrets of the Back 40 initiative did not win the 2014 Ontario Tourism Marketing Award for the Best Marketing Initiative under \$25,000, we were pleased to be nominated and awarded runner-up! We are currently working on updating the map and information so the brochure is ready to reprint in the spring of 2015.

Spruce the Bruce

Lucknow Revitalization Committee

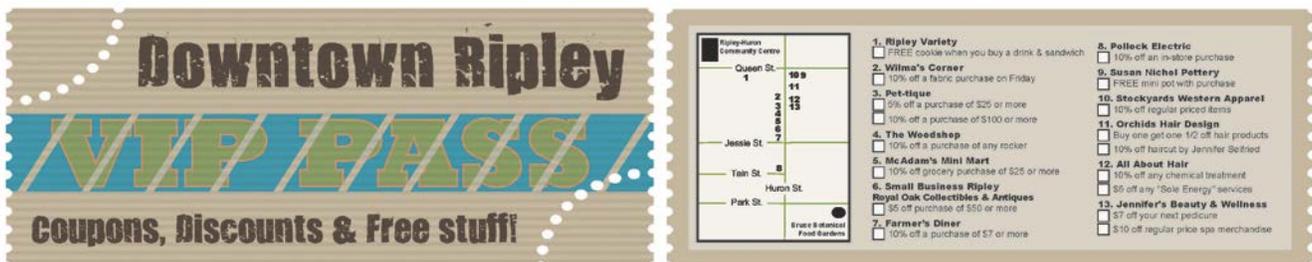
The Lucknow Revitalization Committee met in conjunction with the Lucknow and District Chamber for one year in an effort to improve communication between the two groups. During this time, the main focus was on the Campbell St. road reconstruction project. Both groups acted as a liaison between the community and the Bruce County Highways Department informing the public of different reconstruction options and construction dates. They also discussed traffic calming and bridge options, which will be addressed in 2015.

The Committee actively promotes granting opportunities to downtown businesses and encourages signage and façade improvements. They are currently planning a Historical Walking Tour of the village and recruiting new members to join the Committee in 2015.

Ripley Revitalization Committee

For the past year, the Ripley Revitalization Committee has been working with Ripley property owner, David Brown, to revitalize the façade of the former Courtney Grain and Seed building. Both the Committee and Cultural Roundtable feel it is very important to clean-up the building as it takes up a large part of the downtown and is located across from a popular park area. After an unsuccessful entry into the Benjamin Moore Contest, the Committee applied to the Grey Bruce Community Foundation for a grant to install a mural on the building. The Committee was successful in obtaining a \$3,000 grant and with the \$5,000 contribution from David Brown, a unique mural will be installed prior to the 2015 Ripley Reunion. CoBalt Connects has shared some concepts with the Committee and we will be confirming the design and community engagement segment soon.

In response to concerns relayed from the Ripley Business Committee, the Township, in conjunction with the Ripley Revitalization Committee, designed a Ripley VIP Pass to encourage event attendees to shop downtown. Businesses on the Pass shared the printing costs. Passes were handed out during Bruce Botanical Food Gardens tours and at Ripley area events. Events included the Mushball Tournament, Ripley Artisan Festival, Kincardine Christmas Home Tour, Point Clark Corn Roast and Car Show, and Ripley Wolves Indoor Volleyball Tournament. This initiative received mixed results; some businesses benefited from increased traffic, others did not.



Tourism



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Bruce Grey Brochure Swap

The number of brochures given out at the annual brochure swap continues to increase. This is always a great opportunity for our community organizations to promote their events. This past year I gave out Discovery Guides, Ice Cream Trail™ brochures, Secrets of the Back 40 brochures, Bruce Botanical Food Garden rack cards, Music in the Fields rack cards, and Lucknow and Ripley Fall Fair brochures.

Lake Huron Shoreline Tourism Partners

I continue to meet approximately ten times a year with the other Lake Huron Shoreline Tourism Partners. At the beginning of 2014, we partnered with Bruce County to update and re-print the Beaches brochure. This has become the most requested brochure in Bruce County. We are currently planning to partner with Bruce County to update and re-print the Cycling Brochure, which is another frequently requested brochure. Other projects include the annual brochure mail-out, cycling signage (this will include Point Clark) and a redesign of our tourism website, Sunset.com.

Music in the Fields

The Township is extremely supportive of the Music in the Fields (MITF) Committee and I continue to act as secretary for the Committee. The 2014 MITF event was the most successful one to date with approximately 6,500 people in attendance. This was a SOLD OUT crowd! MITF is now listed as a Top 10 event in Bruce County. This event stimulates our local economy and the Committee has made several changes to the festival over the past year to ensure that local businesses are benefitting from the event. To ensure that attendees are given lots of opportunities to shop in the downtown, visitors are shuttled to and from parking lots in the downtown to the event and campgrounds. An information booth is set-up on site so that guests can get information about local accommodations, eateries, attractions, and shops.

Signage

The Township was successful in obtaining partnership funding in 2013 through the Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RT07) to purchase wayfinding signs for Lucknow. This past fall, the first group of wayfinding signs were installed in Lucknow. The remaining signs will be installed in 2015 in conjunction with the Campbell St. road work. These signs will make it easier for visitors to find their destinations (eg. Music in the Fields), and make people more aware of amenities in the village.



This past summer we were again successful in obtaining RT07 partnership funding; this time to install wayfinding signs in Point Clark. The Point Clark Tourism Wayfinding Project will include the fabrication and installation of ten directional signs, eight trail signs, and three gateway entrance signs. The wayfinding signs are expected to be installed this spring.

We've received several comments in the past from visitors who state they have had difficulty finding the Point Clark Lighthouse and maneuvering around Point Clark. With the re-opening of the Point Clark Lighthouse in 2015, we want to ensure that visitors can find our most popular attraction. The directional signage will significantly improve navigation in Point Clark. The trail signage include signs



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marking the trails and signs to indicate acceptable uses of the trails. We have several beautiful trails in the Lakeshore area and we want to encourage residents and visitors to use them.

The three new Point Clark entrance signs will replace the old faded ones currently marking the village. They are needed to create a good first impression of the small lakeshore community. The proposed transformation is shown below.



Sustainability Statement:

The information provided in this report is consistent with and in keeping with the Municipality's Vision & Mission. The recommendations contribute to our goals in achieving

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|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a prosperous community | <input type="checkbox"/> environmentally conscious community |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a vibrant community | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a spirited community |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> an accessible community | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |

Respectfully submitted:

Taralyn Martin, Business & Economic Officer

Reviewed by:

Mary Rose Walden, Administrator