



## **The Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee (BDAPAC) Meeting**

Haldimand County Administration Building  
Monday, May 15, 2023 9:00am

**Present:** Mayor Bentley, Councillor O'Neill (virtual), Vice-Chair Mike Lessard, Paul Makey, Russell McTear, George Naylor, Adam Peet, Mark Reynolds

**Guests:** Ian Duff, President McSweeney and Associates, Kevin McPhillips Director, Research & Innovation McSweeney and Associates, Jaymie Nelson, Program Manager – Business Retention & Expansion

**Staff:** Mike Evers, General Manager of Community & Development Services, Lidy Romanuk, Manager of Economic Development & Tourism, Jessica Easson, Research & Marketing Technician

**Regrets:** Chair Phil Hauser, Tauri Caputo

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

Meeting is called to order by Vice Chair Lessard 9:03 a.m.

**2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

No conflict of interest declared.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Moved by G. Naylor and seconded by P. Makey that the minutes of the Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee dated April 17, 2023 be approved as presented.

**APPROVED**

**4. People + Potential Labour Force Based Investment Attraction**

Presentation by Kevin McPhillips and Ian Duff from McSweeney and Associates summarizing the People + Potential Labour Force Based Investment Attraction report. Recommendations resulting from the report focused on businesses that can be located within the County and that represent a good potential return on investment. Discussion ensued regarding existing infrastructure, attracting people to work in the County, homebased businesses and further opportunities for investment attraction.

**5. BR+E Presentation**

J. Nelson shared a presentation about the Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) program in Haldimand County (an analysis of the current business climate based on standardized interviews with businesses) and encouraged the committee to share the information with their networks.

**6. Committee Priorities**

**a. EDT Work Plan**

L. Romanuk shared the current EDT workplan and highlighted key priorities including the BR+E project, the implementation of the signage strategy, North

Caledonia Employment Lands study (phase 2 commencing over the summer), ongoing marketing initiatives, the Mohawk College City School program, etc. A discussion arose about further opportunities to attract post-secondary educational institutions.

**b. Homework**

*Identify areas of untapped opportunity or leverage in the Haldimand community for the committee to discuss.*

The committee then discussed available commercial/industrial space for small-medium sized businesses and working with developers. L. Romanuk provided the committee with information on development charges and the Development Concierge Team (DCT). This staff team provides additional supports to businesses that are undertaking a development.

P. Makey shared a presentation. Highlights included attraction opportunities with the Lake Erie Industrial Park (LEIP) and investing in the lands. P. Makey expressed the opportunity for battery energy storage systems, renewable energy, data centers and bit coin mines to locate in LEIP. P. Makey further explained the benefits and opportunities leveraging the Grand River and Lake Erie.

A discussion then ensued.

**c. Budget**

L. Romanuk encouraged the committee to explore how to allocate the BDAPAC annual budget.

**7. Chair and Vice Chair Report**

Vice Chair Lessard reported no new news.

**8. Council Update**

Mayor Bentley provided an update from Council and shared encouragement for the Business Retention and Expansion Program, Digital Main Street Grants and reported on the success of the Business Excellence Breakfast which took place on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

**9. EDT Updates**

L. Romanuk shared Economic Development and Tourism Divisional updates:

- The committee is required to complete the AODA and Integrity Commissioner training sign off.
- The Digital Transformation Grant is currently available for eligible businesses.
- The keynote presentation from the Business Excellence Breakfast has been posted to the website and is available until June 23, 2023.
- On May 29, 2023 EDT in partnership with the Brantford Business Resource Centre and the Grand Erie Business Centre are hosting a Business Basics Workshop.
- On June 1<sup>st</sup> EDT is hosting an Introduction to Experiential Tourism Breakfast, partnering with Ontario's Southwest and Norfolk County.

M. Evers further shared information the division's physician recruitment efforts.

**10. Homework**

Vice Chair Lessard proposed homework for the next meeting being: Refine or develop an idea from Paul Mackey's presentation recognizing the ongoing efforts of the Economic Development and Tourism Team.

**11. New Business**

- a. **HBN representative** – Vice Chair Lessard will represent the BDAPAC at the upcoming HBN meeting.
- b. **July 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting** – The committee discussed moving the July meeting up to June to discuss budget.

**12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 am, moved by A. Peet seconded by R. McTear.