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# HALDIMAND COUNTY

## Report CDP-01-2020 Black Settlers of Canfield Documentary Series – Request for Support

For Consideration by Council in Committee on February 4, 2020

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### OBJECTIVE:

To provide an update to Council regarding the request for County financial and in-kind support from Windecker Road Films, which is creating a documentary series about the Black Settlers of Canfield through a Bell Media grant.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CDP-01-2020 Black Settlers of Canfield Documentary Series – Request for Support be received;
2. AND THAT the request for financial support in the amount of \$2,000, with related funding from the Community Partnership Capital Reserve, be approved;
3. AND THAT the Economic Development & Tourism (EDT) Division waive any security deposits and fees typically required for filming when using municipal property;
4. AND THAT the revised budget, as outlined in Report CDP-01-2020, be approved.

**Prepared by:** Katrina Schmitz, Manager, Community Development & Partnerships

**Respectfully submitted:** Mike Evers, MCIP, RPP, BES, General Manager of Community & Development Services

**Approved:** Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Windecker Road Films is a local, independent TV/film production company owned and operated by Graeme Bachiu.

At December 10, 2019 Council in Committee, Mr. Bachiu made a presentation about a six-part documentary television series entitled “The Black Settlers of Canfield” he is producing thanks to a \$30,000 grant from Bell Media. The series, which will explore the stories of the Black settlers of Canfield through the experiences of their descendants, will touch on local themes of inclusivity, diversity and respect. Mr. Bachiu will be working with local historian Sylvia Weaver, who spearheaded the installation of a Black Settlement Marker in Canfield in 2018, the unveiling of which Mr. Bachiu filmed and provided to Haldimand County for promotional, tourism and archival purposes. The new six-part documentary series will be aired on Bell Media’s Fibe TV1 streaming service in late 2020, reaching 1.8 million subscribers in eastern Canada and Manitoba.

The \$30,000 grant from Bell Media represents approximately 75% of the total costs for the production; Mr. Bachiu has also received a \$300 contribution from Heritage Haldimand, which was matched by another \$300 from the Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation (SWOTC).

Mr. Bachiu's request to Council was for a \$5,000 grant from Haldimand County as well as the waiving of some of the County's permit fees for filming. In return for this support, he would provide the following:

- Donation of 'hard' copies of the final project (to the County's archives and each Library Branch with a permitted use license (non-commercial purposes);
- A 15-second promotional spot (consistent with County branding) for inclusion in each episode; and,
- Recognition of the County's financial support and partnership in the closing credits of each episode, as well as through social media and other promotions.

Heritage Haldimand and staff in the Community Development & Partnerships (Heritage & Culture Unit) and Economic Development & Tourism Divisions support the project and recommend a \$2,000 grant. As well, Economic Development & Tourism will help Mr. Bachiu navigate the requirements as outlined in Haldimand County's Filming Guidelines and will further waive any security deposits typically required for filming that requires the use of County property.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Haldimand County's Community Partnership Program (CPP) is intended to encourage and enhance strategic and innovative partnerships to the benefit of community stakeholders and the municipality, offering a simple, streamlined and customer-focused approach to the construction of new capital projects or capital enhancements to existing assets on County property. The Program is intended to balance the rigor of the review process—necessary to ensure legitimate public interest issues are addressed—with flexibility and respect for the volunteer commitment of the groups.

Since 2011, more than seventy (70) CPP projects have been completed, leveraging more than \$2 million in community-raised funds to construct more than \$3.7 million in County enhancements.

Although the Windecker Road Films documentary series is not a capital project, it does fit within the intent of the CPP as it:

- (i) Will result in a tangible asset which the County can use for tourism and heritage promotion purposes;
- (ii) Is a partnership with a local entity;
- (iii) Will feature locations throughout Haldimand; and,
- (iv) Is expected to add economic benefit (both during filming and through tourism initiatives).

The request from Windecker Road Films is for:

- (i) Approval to undertake this project throughout Haldimand County;
- (ii) Grant funding in the amount of \$5,000 towards the production costs; and,
- (iii) Waiving of security deposits typically requested for film productions in the County.

Heritage Haldimand and staff are supportive of the project, and are recommending a \$2,000 grant.

The document Guidelines & Permits for Filming in Haldimand County identifies that the application requesting approval for location filming within Haldimand County includes security deposit of \$5000, Commercial General Liability Insurance (\$2,500,000), Automobile Third-Party and Liability Insurance (\$2,500,000). Economic Development & Tourism is waiving the security deposit requirement applicable for filming on Haldimand County locations. Mr. Bachiu will be required to follow the filming guidelines and obtain the proper insurance.

## **ANALYSIS:**

Mr. Bachiu's development of "The Black Settlers of Canfield" documentary series stems from his interest in local history, including his filming of the 2018 unveiling of the Black Settlement Marker in Canfield which celebrated local Black history and the community's role in the Underground Railroad. His production company—Windecker Road Films—has also worked with Economic Development & Tourism staff on a variety of initiatives, all with the intent of promoting local history and experiences.

### **Project Details:**

The documentary is comprised of six episodes which will explore the history of Black settlers in Canfield, touching on themes of inclusivity, diversity and respect, which were the historical foundations of the community in Canfield and continue to be valued today in Haldimand County. Some of the stories within the series have national and international significance which has, thus far, not yet reached a public audience. Mr. Bachiu is working with local historian Sylvia Weaver, who was instrumental in the installation of a Black settlement marker in Canfield in 2018 and has given numerous popular talks about Black history in the area.

The series will feature local County facilities (such as the Canfield Community Centre and Cayuga Library + Heritage Centre) as well as interviews and collaboration with Heritage & Culture staff.

### **Benefit:**

This series will serve as a permanent record of Black history in Canfield and Haldimand County, including hard copies of the documentary available in all Library Branches and the Cayuga Library + Heritage Centre, and will support County tourism and promotion efforts.

Heritage Haldimand is extremely supportive of the project and has provided a \$300 contribution towards the project, which was matched by a contribution from the Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation (SWOTC).

This project has direct ties to the Black Settler Marker project in Canfield and will serve to further the significant historical narrative that was introduced as part of that 2018 project. Interest in that project has been widespread; Haldimand Museums, over the past two years, have noted an increase in requests for information related to Black settlers and, the topic of Black Settlement and the Underground Railway in Haldimand and continues to be a requested topic for presentation by local and visiting groups (Rotary Clubs, Dunnville District Heritage Association, North Erie Shore Historical Society).

As noted in the Background section, this proposal does not represent the typical capital project that is considered through the CPP policy. With that said, staff consider there to be a tangible asset component in the form of a product (video series) that can be used for cultural heritage promotion and tourism purposes. This product could be hosted at libraries throughout the County and promoted via County museums, tourism and other (e.g. County website). It is noted that a similar approach to funding support was taken with the Haldimand Norfolk Regional Archeology Project (HNRAP) where Council contributed funds from this funding source for the identification and analysis of chert samples from the Nanticoke (pre-contact era) and upon completion the HNRAP will provide a final report noting the findings. This information will be placed with the Haldimand Museums and be made available for use by researchers.

### **Funding Plan:**

The majority of funding for the project (\$30,000 or 75%) has been secured through a grant from Bell Media. The remaining funds are being sourced by Mr. Bachiu through donations and contributions.

## FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

In keeping with similar requests for financial support from community groups hoping to collaborate with the County to produce tangible assets, Mr. Bachiu's request was reviewed through Haldimand County's Community Partnership Program (CPP), which encourages and actively supports partnerships with not-for-profit community groups.

Based upon approved/recommended projects to date requiring funding from the Community Partnership Capital Reserve, there are sufficient funds available in the Reserve to support the staff-recommended \$2,000 grant. Should this initiative be approved, there remains approximately \$108,040 in the Community Partnership Capital Reserve which is unallocated.

	Current Approved Budget	Proposed Revised Budget
<b>Expenditures:</b>		
Black Settlers of Canfield Documentary Series Grant	\$0	\$2,000
<b>Total Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>
<b>Financing:</b>		
Community Partnership Capital Reserve	\$0	\$2,000
<b>Total Financing:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>

It should be noted that, in 2014, Council changed the CPP funding source from a tax supported levy contribution to the 20% CVF allocated to County-wide vibrancy initiatives.

## STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

This request was reviewed by the members of Heritage Haldimand as well as staff from Heritage & Culture and Economic Development & Tourism, all of whom support the project.

## REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: Yes

Policy: No

## ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter – Windecker Road Films (December 10, 2019).