



**THE CORPORATION OF
HALDIMAND COUNTY**

**Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee
Minutes**

Date: January 27, 2025
Time: 9:00 A.M.
Location: Haldimand County Administration Building - Haldimand Room
53 Thorburn Street South, Cayuga

Members Present P. Makey, Chair
S. Bentley, Mayor
T. Caputo, Member
M. Reynolds, Member
G. Naylor, Vice-Chair
P. O'Neill, Councillor
A. Peet, Member

Regrets M. Lessard, Member
P. Hauser, Member
M. Evers, General Manager, Community & Development Services

Staff Present J. Nelson, Project Manager, Business Retention and Expansion, EDT
L. Romanuk, Manager, EDT
C. Donaldson, Administrative Assistant, EDT
W. Radix, Research & Marketing Technician, EDT
B. Brown, Senior Economic Development Officer, EDT

A. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

B. Land Acknowledgement

Chair P. Makey read the Land Acknowledgement statement.

C. Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

None disclosed.

D. Approval of Previous Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee Minutes

1. Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee Minutes - November 18, 2024

Recommendation 1

Moved By: G. Naylor, Member

Seconded By: T. Caputo, Member

THAT the minutes of the Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee dated November 18, 2024 be approved as presented.

APPROVED

E. Delegations

1. Chair / Vice-Chair Election

Chair P. Makey was nominated to serve as Chair of the Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee from this date until the first Committee meeting in the 2026 calendar year.

P. Makey accepted the nomination.

Vice-Chair G. Naylor was nominated to serve as Vice-Chair of the Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee from this date until the first Committee meeting in the 2026 calendar year.

G. Naylor accepted the nomination.

2. Lower Grand River Visitor Experience Strategy Update

B. Brown provided an overview on the Lower Grand River Visitor Experience Strategy (VES) and provided an introduction on KLB consulting.

K. Knapp presented an introduction to the project, strategy recommendations and business cases.

Highlights included:

- An overview was provided on the extensive consultations that were held with staff, community stakeholders, and local organizations. Discussions centered on sustainability and environmental protection, community involvement and inclusivity, infrastructure and accessibility, economic development, and the preservation of cultural heritage.

- K. Knapp provided an outline of the Lower Grand River Visitor Experience Strategy (VES) that will serve as a planning and investment tool to enhance visitor connections and activate the Lower Grand River. This strategy will be introduced with a phased implementation plan outlining short, medium, and long-term recommendations. It is understood that not all initiatives may be achievable and that review and prioritization of recommendations over time in alignment with broader County priorities will be required, including careful review of budget limitations/implications.
- In addition to the strategy, three 'Business in a Box' concepts were introduced which included a Cultural Experience celebrating the region's heritage, a River-Adjacent Culinary Experience highlighting local cuisine, and an Outfitters Experience providing adventure and eco-tourism activities that make use of the natural landscape.
- The Lower Grand River Visitor Experience Strategy is tentatively scheduled to be presented at the March 18th, 2025 Council in Committee Meeting.

Mark Reynolds joined at 9:22am, half way through this presentation.

P. Makey thanked KLB for the presentation.

Discussion ensued.

Recommendation 3

Seconded By: G. Naylor, Member

Motion to receive the draft Lower Grand River Visitor Experience Strategy as information, and that, the strategy be presented to Council.

APPROVED

F. Items for Consideration

1. Council Update

Councillor O'Neill provided the following updates:

- The Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee update to Council was well received
- Provided an overview on the ROMA conference delegation with Minister Fedeli

Mayor Bentley joined the meeting at 9:48 am.

Mayor Bentley provided the following council updates:

- Minister of Natural resources
- Carbon Capture and Storage; Enbridge will be bringing a presentation to Council
- Met with Minister of Indigenous affairs; building relationships with Six Nations of the Grand River
- Ward Boundary review upcoming
- Traffic Management Open House on February 4th in Dunnville and February 6th in Caledonia
- Haldimand County is holding a by-election to fill vacant Council seats for Ward 1 and Ward 4 and is currently accepting nominations for registered candidates
- April 10th is election day; both online and advanced polls will be available

2. Chair and Vice-Chair Report

G. Naylor briefly described his experience taking the Robert Bell Course and expressed the importance of teamwork. He plans to share all of his findings from the course with the entire committee at an upcoming meeting.

Key findings included:

- Importance of collaboration between different government bodies and titles
- Presentation on the City of Hamilton trying to offset the effect of technology on the economy, specifically job loss

P. Makey discussed the importance of being current and competitive in the economy which includes strategic partnerships with industries. Moving forward, a key take away from the course is how to attract investors to grow the economy.

Overall, both were satisfied with the course offerings so far.

3. Economic Data Dashboard

W. Radix presented the Data Dashboard workplan priority of the committee.

The committee discussed further metrics for W. Radix to investigate.

Focus areas for the Economic Data Dashboard included:

- Economic overview
- Development Overview
- CIP Overview

- Accommodation Overview
- Tourism Overview
- Agriculture Overview

The committee discussed leveraging the data in terms of supporting the VES project/strategy.

P. Makey asked the committee to take the handout home and brainstorm ideas on how to utilize data to support future activities.

4. 2024 Budget & Project Follow Ups

J. Nelson provided the following highlights:

- Two EDT staff went to Toronto to pitch to the Ministry of Tourism's Investment Dragons and it was successful with some connections made
- The committee supported AgScape financially and there was a great turnout of over 600 students with positive feedback
- The Job Fair for 2025 is planned for April 24th and will be hosted at the Riverside Exhibition Center
- Looking for committee assistance with recruiting once materials are ready

5. Tourism Attraction Priority

J. Nelson described that staff met with A. Peet and Councillor O'Neill to discuss Tourism Attraction as a committee moving forward. It is recommended that Tourism attraction remain as a standing item on the agenda and that any BDAPAC work plan items that fall within that priority are reported on in this section.

For 2025 it is anticipated these will include:

- Implementation of the VES (pending approvals from Council)
- Downtown and Tourism Investment Attraction Project

6. Downtown and Tourism Investment Attraction – Key Performance Indicators

J. Nelson provided an overview of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) prepared by Banko Creative Studio.

Discussion ensued.

Recommendation 4

Moved By: P. Makey, Chair

Seconded By: T. Caputo, Member

A motion to approve the Downtown and Tourism Attraction Project and contribute \$19,000 plus HST of BDAPAC's budget to complete Phase 1 in 2025 with the request to receive a report from staff on project outputs/outcomes as information only.

APPROVED

7. Economic Development & Tourism Updates

L. Romanuk provided the following EDT updates:

- Independent Electricity System Operation (IESO) Request for Proposal Long Term 2 - Municipal Support resolutions
- CEC-01-2025 Haldimand County 2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results: 301 telephone interviews and 385 additional responses online
- January 30 - Capital Budget will be presented to Council
- February 27 - Operating Budget will be presented to Council
- Signage strategy has begun physical implementation
- Business Symposium is on May 1st, all invited to attend

G. New Business

1. Revised BDAPAC Meeting Schedule

The committee discussed changing the day of the week and time period.

The committee decided to allow EDT staff to propose new dates and times to be approved by a virtual vote.

2. Agricultural Advisory Committee Collaboration

P. Makey met with Chair, Neil Hedley, of the Agricultural Advisory Committee to discuss Agricultural Business Attraction strategies. The next step is for P. Makey to attendee at an upcoming Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting and will return with feedback.

3. Tourism Attraction Collaboration

G. Naylor discussed briefly the connections with the owner of Ye Ole Squire and proposed a collaboration with a type of tourism attraction event. EDT to further investigate the opportunity.

4. Brantford Resource Centre (BRC)

L. Romanuk discussed the support of the Brantford Resource Center for entrepreneurs, and the potential to bring forward information at an upcoming meeting.

H. Adjournment

Recommendation 6

Moved By: A. Peet, Member

Seconded By: S. Bentley, Mayor

THAT this meeting is now adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

APPROVED