

## Tourism Advisory Committee July 24, 2019 – 9:00 AM

The Tourism Advisory Committee met on the above date at the County Administration Building with the following members in attendance:

Present: Andrew Siegwart, Jim Halliday, Joel Dawson, Andrea O'Reilly, Jim Diebel, and Councillor Shirley Keaveney

Regrets: Councillor Sue Carleton

### Staff

Present: Bryan Plumstead, Tourism Manager; Heather Aljoe, Tourism Marketing and Communications Specialist; Alison Theodore, Tourism Partner and Media Relations Specialist; Stephanie Stewart, Manager of Community Transportation; Olivia Yale, Summer Student; and Jacquelyn Morrison, Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator

## Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM.

## Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

The tourism summer students, Mae Fernandes and Beth Walpole, introduced themselves to the Committee and then left the meeting. Olivia Yale, tourism and communications summer student, introduced herself. Stephanie Stewart, Manager of Community Transportation, introduced herself and described her role to the Committee.

## Destination Development Action Plan (DDAP) – 2019 Quarter 2 Scorecard

Alison Theodore reviewed Pillar 1, Community Engagement, including the tourism stakeholder database, stakeholder communications, the industry website, and the tourism talks events. She provided further information on the experience development

workshop. The Committee discussed the familiarization tours and how to encourage greater involvement by creating and sharing a summary document.

Heather Aljoe reviewed Pillar 2, Destination Management, including the marketing campaign and tactical plan, the planned revamp of [www.visitgrey.ca](http://www.visitgrey.ca), and using Crowdriff Digital Assets as a user generated content platform. Bryan Plumstead will investigate if Crowdriff Digit Assets content can be shared with municipal partners and Destination Marketing Organizations (“DMOs”).

Scott Taylor, Senior Planner, entered the meeting.

Ms. Aljoe discussed Social Media Metrics and noted that the number of Instagram followers has increased. Ms. Theodore noted that some media influencers have been taking over the County’s Instagram account when they are visiting. Ms. Aljoe also reviewed the Twitter followers, the [visitgrey.ca](http://visitgrey.ca) metrics, and the newsletter subscriptions.

Ms. Theodore discussed media relations. Five social media influencers visited Grey County: Yashy Murphy, Andrea Traynor, Maya Fitzpatrick, Sonya Kerr, and Tammy Mitchell. There were two television and radio features, being CTV Your Morning and Global News Radio.

Bryan Plumstead reviewed Pillar 3, Market Research and Tracking. Mr. Plumstead has visited each local municipal council to discuss tourism and metrics. Discussion occurred on whether businesses or communities could access these figures. Discussion occurred on the opportunities available to operators to provide a positive and inclusive experience for visitors. The Committee suggested creating content on emerging markets and communication plans that can be shared with tourism operators. Market readiness for new and changing demographics is important for the success of businesses. The Committee will explore having a full day learning session with Business Improvement Areas, Chambers of Commerce, economic development teams, and DMOs.

## Reports

### CAOR-TAC-09-19 Sustainable Tourism in Grey County

Bryan Plumstead discussed the above report. He noted the definition and the principles of sustainable tourism.

Scott Taylor discussed the consultation process for the new Official Plan. He noted the balance between encouraging tourism while protecting private property rights.

Mr. Siegwart discussed the potential role of municipalities in sustainability: recycling, composting, water filling systems. Jim Diebel noted that sustainability is an ongoing process. Mr. Siegwart suggested multi-sector collaboration between municipalities and

companies. Joel Dawson commented on the importance of providing sustainable alternatives for operators. Jim Diebel suggested providing examples that the County has done and what local municipalities can do.

Scott Taylor noted that the County is also starting a Climate Change Action Plan.

Mr. Siegwart suggested hosting discussions about desires and frameworks for the operators where businesses can voice concerns and struggles in a safe environment. Mr. Siegwart suggested talking to businesses and determining what the challenges and opportunities regarding sustainability are.

Bryan Plumstead noted the actions coming out of the report, being the inventory and engagement of natural areas with tourism visitation, continued work in active transportation, and investigation of sustainable tourism resources for businesses. The Committee directed that the third action item, being sustainable tourism resources for businesses, be a broader investigation with operators of sustainable tourism. Mr. Plumstead will start with one-on-ones with businesses across the County and then that can lead to future conversations on sustainability.

*TAC05-19* Moved by: Andrea O'Reilly Seconded by: Shirley Keaveney

**That Report CAOR-TAC-09-19 regarding Sustainable Tourism be received for information; and**

**That staff proceed with recommended actions as amended.**

Carried

Scott Taylor left the meeting.

## CAOR-TAC-10-19 Federal Tourism Growth Strategy

Bryan Plumstead highlighted the benefits of the Federal Tourism Growth Strategy.

*TAC06-19* Moved by: Andrea O'Reilly Seconded by: Shirley Keaveney

**That Report CAOR-TAC-10-19 Federal Tourism Growth Strategy be received for information.**

Carried

## Grey County Transportation Project Verbal Update

Stephanie Stewart provided an update on the community transportation project. She has been meeting with all local municipalities and is creating a list of stakeholders to speak with to gather information on transportation opportunities. The County has received funding for a community transportation project, which will be used to create transportation options across the County including from Owen Sound to Hanover and along highways 10 and 26.

Ms. Stewart will be presenting to County Council on August 8<sup>th</sup>. She discussed the benefits of transportation and having accessible transportation methods that everyone can use. She is seeking innovative options to make transportation as robust as possible and has been working with GIS to map out points of interest. The project is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2019.

Andrew Siegwart noted that transportation is an employment opportunity. The Committee discussed possible challenges for the project. The Committee suggested speaking with Gemma Mendez-Smith, Martin Rydlo, and Driver's Seat.

## Staff Updates

Alison Theodore provided information on the RTO7 (BruceGreySimcoe) T3 Accelerator Program. Two local businesses have been accepted into the program. Ms. Theodore discussed the Tourism Matters in Grey campaign. She shared the press release, radio advertisements, Council and staff photographs, and social media posts. She discussed the tourism industry familiarization tour. The Committee discussed opportunities for next year's Tourism Matters campaign, such as business open houses, having operators attend Council presentations, or having a mini conference.

Heather Aljoe shared the 2019 Marketing Strategy and discussed the priorities and goals. She provided information on the brand platform, tourism market trends, target markets, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. She provided an overview of the marketing strategy and the tactical plan. The Strategy will be refreshed next year.

Bryan Plumstead discussed his tourism delegations to local municipalities. He noted that there was engagement and interest from all municipalities, including comments on signage, trails, internet access, and garbage. Mr. Plumstead will continue to build on the momentum for presentations next year.

Mr. Plumstead discussed the Cycling and Trails Master Plan and advised there is a draft plan for Grey County. Many routes include County Roads with paved shoulders. The plan will be reviewed internally and then sent out to municipal partners. A draft will then be brought to Council and shared with the public. Mr. Plumstead noted balancing the plan with what is achievable by municipalities. Councillor Keaveney suggested bringing municipalities options for how the plan could be implemented, such as bike lanes or paved shoulders. Discussion occurred on active transportation and cycling seasonality.

Mr. Plumstead shared the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario ("TIAO") annual report. The TIAO Tourism Summit is being held at Blue Mountain Resort on October 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> and Committee members are encouraged to attend.

## Other Business

There was no other business.

## Next Meeting Dates

The next meetings will be held September 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. and November 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

On motion by Joel Dawson and Jim Halliday, the meeting adjourned at 12:12PM.

Andrew Siegwart, Chair