



Committee Minutes

Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee

May 5, 2022 – 8:30 AM

The Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee met on the above date through electronic means with the following members in attendance:

Present: Ashley Chapman, Councillors John Woodbury, Sue Carleton, Tom Hutchinson, Ian Boddy, Shirley Keaveney, Peter Bordignon and Deputy Warden Paul McQueen. John Kurvink joined the meeting in progress.

Regrets: Steacy Den Haan, Brian Davenport, Dave Shorey, Sharif Rahman, and Warden Hicks, Dr. Ian Arra,

Staff

Present: Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Randy Scherzer, Deputy CAO; Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture; Scott Taylor, Manager of Planning Services; Steve Furness, Manager Economic Development; Philly Markowitz, Economic Development Officer; Alison Theodore, Economic Development Officer; Courtney Miller, Business Enterprise Manager; Jacinda Rudolph, Economic Development Officer; Stephanie Lacey-Avon, Intermediate Planner; Linda Swanston, Manager, Climate Change; Kim Trombley, Administrative Assistant, Deepikaa Gupta, Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership Coordinator; Rob Hatten, Communications Manager and Heather Morrison, Clerk.

Local CAOs: Laura Johnson, West Grey, Karen Govan, Grey Highlands, and Brian Tocheri, Hanover

Economic Development Officers and Municipal Staff: April Marshall, Hanover, Lorelie Spencer and Kody Hewlett, West Grey, Terri Murphy, Southgate, Michele Harris, Grey Highlands, Janet Sperling, Meaford, Brent Fisher and Pam Coulter, Owen Sound.

Call to Order

The Clerk confirmed quorum had been reached and Chair Keaveney called the meeting to order at 8:40 AM.

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations made.

Reports

EDTC-ED-10-22 Investment Attraction Strategy

Steve Furness introduced Gerry Pisarzowski, Senior Consultant, Luigi Presta, Managing Partner and Tony Romano, Senior Consultant from ThinkCompass who provided an overview of the Investment Attraction Strategy for the Committee.

Mr. Pisarzowski provided some background information on the strategy and the competition for investment opportunities. He spoke to the economic development tools that are used to influence investment choices which include a combination of business retention and expansion opportunities along with investment attraction tools.

Mr. Pisarzowski then spoke to the influence of new investment. He noted that there are six key ways new investment can benefit local businesses including exports, new talent, competition, technology transfers, scale effects, and improved inputs. He then outlined the connection between the investment strategy and the County's Official Plan (OP) noting that there are five key themes in the OP including cultivate Grey, Develop Grey, Natural Grey, Live Grey, and Move Grey. He noted that the Investment Strategy also builds on the branding, inventory and labour force work already completed through the previous Economic Development Strategy which focused on becoming Investment Ready.

Mr. Pisarzowski outlined the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relative to investment attraction in Grey County. He noted the strength included such things as availability of land for development, proximity to the Bruce Peninsula, Beaver Valley and Georgian Bay, the Wiarton International Airport, great quality of life, and support of local communities and municipalities amongst others. He then spoke to the weaknesses which include a tight labour market, short supply of affordable housing, lack of visibility in key markets, and distance from major 400 series highways.

Mr. Pisarzowski outlined the opportunities in the area which include the development of renewable energy projects, rising costs of doing business in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), cost of living in the GTA, remote working opportunities, and others. He noted the threats include competition from other jurisdictions, the inability to differentiate Grey

County from other areas, insufficient resources to respond in a timely manner to potential investors, and lack of suitable land for industrial development, amongst others.

Mr. Pisarzowski then spoke to the ability to build on the strengths and leverage opportunities as part of the Investment Attraction Strategy. He spoke to opportunities in the agri-food industry, clean technology, knowledge-based labour market and tourism related experiences.

The Investment and Attraction Strategy identified six key investment goals:

1. Work with local businesses to encourage and support their commitment to invest, expand and create jobs and support the efforts of the Economic Development, Tourism and Culture Department
2. Enhance and promote Grey County's presence in the global market
3. Convince potential international investors in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, food processing and clean technology that Grey County is the best place to locate in North America
4. Market Grey County as a preferred location for investment in advanced manufacturing, food processing and clean technology
5. Engage with public and private sector organizations to build partnerships that promote Grey County as an attractive location for investment
6. Position Grey County and its member communities as investment-ready

The objectives, strategies, and implementation for each of the above-noted goals were then outlined. The timelines were reviewed with the Committee, noting both short and long-term goals.

Ashley Chapman left the meeting during the presentation.

Clerk Morrison noted that quorum has been lost and therefore general questions could be taken but no advancement of County business could occur.

General questions and comments related to the presentation and the goals contained in the strategy then followed from the Committee members. It was noted that there are benefits and opportunities across all municipalities in Grey County including arts and culture, and working towards more shovel ready lands. Broadband was discussed and it was noted that it is a requirement for residents and businesses alike. Clean energy technology opportunities were also highlighted.

Discussion on the Community Improvement Plans, Business Mix Analysis and Investment Strategy coordination were highlighted. Ms. Myers noted that these are two important pieces to make Grey County investment ready. She highlighted the broad view of investment opportunities across all areas of the county, reinforcing the importance of a collective Grey County approach, drawing on the assets, coordination

and support of all municipalities. Clean energy was then highlighted as an opportunity within the area. Labour availability was also noted as a challenge across all sectors. The work being completed at Sydenham Campus was noted as a driver for business retention, and coordination of service providers, employers, Georgian College and local school boards. The success of LaunchPad and investments in youth and international students was also noted.

Clerk Morrison noted that member John Kurvink has joined the meeting and quorum was re-achieved.

It was noted that a collective approach and promotion and marketing of Grey's unique value proposition is the key to success in moving opportunities forward.

ED04-22 Moved by: Councillor Woodbury Seconded by: Councillor Hutchinson

That Report EDTC-ED-10-22 be received, and the Investment Attraction Strategy be endorsed; and

That staff be directed to develop and execute the first mission as per the 2022 contribution agreement for CanExport Community Investments Subprogram; and

That staff maintain the relationship with ThinkCOMPASS and enter an annual contract to execute the three-year strategic action plan alongside staff as per annual budget approval.

Carried

Roundtable Discussion

Councillor Boddy noted that he and Steve Furness recently attended Canadian Nuclear Association Conference in Ottawa related to clean energy. He noted the opportunities for networking and industry relationships.

Other Business

Job Fairs

Jacinda Rudolph provided an overview of the recent job fairs. She noted an increased participation over the years. Three job fairs were hosted in 2022 across the County and Ms. Rudolph noted that participation has changed with numbers decreasing significantly from previous years. Employers are trying to address workforce challenges through a variety of ways with youth and internationally skilled workers being key groups to

engage. She noted that looking at the entire package for employment opportunities was important to those seeking work.

Sydenham Campus and Business Enterprise Centre Update

Steve Furness noted that the pandemic has impacted the timeline of achievements noted in the initial business plan. There are several tenants in the Campus including a childcare, YMCA with a focus on health care, Catapult Grey Bruce, along with increased use of the gym for training opportunities. He also noted that the Bruce Grey Catholic School Board is holding its STEM Skills competition (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) in May. Mr. Furness noted that efforts are being made to purchase equipment for the fab lab to support ongoing prototyping and training opportunities.

Courtney Miller provided an update on the Business Enterprise Centre noting that this year's numbers are slightly higher than previous years. She noted that staff are seeing more in the early stage of business development, and staff are assisting them in working through their ideas for a business. Starter Company Plus grant programs are underway and she noted that 8-10 grants will be awarded to support business development in 2022. Ms. Miller noted that the Summer Company has only one spot remaining for 2022. Fall plans are underway with in person programming being planned to better support networking among small business owners.

Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership Update (GBLIP)

Deepikaa Gupta provided an update on the GBLIP program. Major focus on social determinants of health and quality of life. The Partnership is working with organizations across Grey and Bruce as well as supporting efforts for Ukrainian families coming to the area with assistance from Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada. She provided highlights of the work completed including municipal staff training in inclusion and diversity, the development of a training manual, and making Grey County more visible and welcoming. Further information on settlement services relative to Ukrainian families was provided to the committee.

Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP)-Going Green in Grey

Linda Swanston provided an update that the CCAP was adopted in April 2022 by Grey County Council with a goal of achieving corporate net zero emissions by 2045 and community net zero emissions by 2050. Postcards have been created to spread the word on the CCAP and to provide a summary of the plan as well as a link to the full plan. She highlighted the public input on the plan and noted that stakeholders identified climate change as a key consideration when looking at relocation opportunities. She noted that having infrastructure ready to implement climate change actions was very important.

Official Plan Amendment 11 Update (Housekeeping Amendment)

Scott Taylor spoke to the growth population and employment number updates and looking at fine tuning some policies included in the OP and climate change actions along with other housekeeping amendments. He noted that staff are working through all of the comments and documents recently received and hope to have a final draft OPA 11 in the next few weeks for public review and for Council's consideration.

Age Friendly Community Strategy and Action Plan Approved

Stephanie Lacey-Avon provided an update on the Age-Friendly Community Strategy and Action Plan noting that comments from this committee was invaluable and have been incorporated into the final plan. She noted that economic development holds a major focus within the plan. She highlighted some areas of focus relative to employment and economic development opportunities. The next steps will include an application to the World Health Organization to have Grey County declared an Age-Friendly Community.

Next Meeting Dates

To Be Determined

Adjournment

On motion by Councillors Boddy and Woodbury, the Committee adjourned at 10:09 AM.

Shirley Keaveney, Chair