

# Huron County Economic Development Department

## October/November 2017 Update

The Huron County Economic Development Team has been working on a variety of projects and initiatives. The following is a list of major work underway or currently being planned. Feel free to call Cody Joudry at (519) 440-2385 or by email at [cjoudry@huroncounty.ca](mailto:cjoudry@huroncounty.ca) for more information.

### Agri-Food Economic Development Work Plan 2017-2020

The draft work plan has been well received and we have made changes based on the feedback received. We continue to present it to different stakeholders for feedback. We'll bring it back to Council in December for further consideration.

### Financing for New Farmers Resource

SBC Coordinator Kim Postma is developing a directory of financing resources for new farmers. Once complete in early January 2018 we expect to hold a "speed dating" event for young entrepreneurs interested in agri-food businesses to meet people involved in the lending and grant program sector.

Agri-Food Sector

### Develop Ready Land Database

EDO Chris Watson is working with the Planning Department to develop an up-to-date directory of development-ready commercial, industrial, and residential land.

### Fall Workshop & Events Series

SBC Coordinator Nicki Darbyson is coordinating a series of workshops and networking events. We have lowered the cost for some of these events for this series to see if we can increase attendance. The events are well-organized and we're particularly excited about the networking event on November 16 where Sabrina Geremia, head of Google Canada will be the keynote speaker. See attached flyer for more details.

### Business Consults

We continue to work with entrepreneurs by providing support in business and financial planning, collaborating on initiatives, and delivering our Starter Company Plus, Summer Company, and Social Enterprise programs. In the month of October we worked with 21 different business owners to assist them along their paths.

Entrepreneurship & Business

### Huron Manufacturers Association

We continue to work and support the Huron Manufacturers Association with a new focus on helping build sustainability for the organization. In addition, we support and participated in their successful School Tours program in October, and purchased two tables for their annual gala event.

Manufacturing

## **Tourism, Arts and Culture Taskforce**

Communications & Marketing Officer Scott Currie continues to lead the taskforce's ongoing planning and strategy work. We plan to bring a strategy back to Council in 2018 from this group's work.

## **RTO4 Projects**

Communications & Marketing Officer Scott Currie continues to work collaboratively with RTO4 on three major projects: (1) G2G Trail; (2) Destination Development in Bayfield and (3) Destination Development in Blyth.

## **Culinary Tourism Readiness Initiative**

SBC Coordinator Patrick Donnelly has initiated a collaboration with Taste of Huron, the Culinary Tourism Alliance, and our Small Business Centre staff to create a program for culinary businesses wishing to develop a tourism-focused aspect to their existing business. We expect this program to take on 10 initial businesses starting in early 2018.

## **Workforce Attraction & Retention Strategy (WARS)**

Immigration Liaison Kristin Crane, EDO Chris Watson and Human Resources Recruiter Kristin Van Gaalen are developing an exciting strategy and work plan for Council's consideration. We'll be presenting the WARS draft to the Local Immigration Partnership and Economic Development Board between December and January for feedback with a final draft for Council's review in February.

## **Employer Roundtable**

Immigration Liaison Kristin Crane and EDO Chris Watson will be hosting a roundtable on Nov 20 in Exeter to bring employers and service providers together to talk about employee hiring and shortage challenges. We'll be using this forum as a way to identify issues, build awareness and develop new collaborative initiatives. Attending this event is a prerequisite for attending the job fair noted below.

## **'Not Just Another' Job Fair 2018**

Although traditional job fairs are not always successful our local employers have asked us to organize an event to help with employee shortages. To respond to this need we'll be hosting an event in London, ON in late January. The first half of the day will be employers presenting on their businesses, the types of jobs they have to offer, and what the work and work environment is like. The afternoon will be for businesses to conduct interviews of job seekers that meet their minimum qualifications, or referrals to employment agencies.

## **Engage Huron**

SBC Coordinator Patrick Donnelly with support from EDO Chris Watson have re-energized this at-arms-length organization with the first chapter reforming in Goderich. Engage Huron has met several times and brings professionals (usually younger) together for networking and building social relationships to help retain this important population segment as well as attract expatriates.

### **EcDev Department Work Plan**

The department went through an intensive team building, work planning, and budgeting process in October. We are putting the final touches on a draft work plan for Council's review in December.

### **Grow Success Project**

HC Economic Development Board Chair Jim Lynn and Vice Chair John Marshall presented to the member municipalities about the Grow Success project. We've made some revisions to the Request for Proposals and expect to release it in the last week of November.

### **Municipal Strategic Plans**

EDO Chris Watson with OMAFRA Representative Vicki Lass met with all member Municipalities to review their economic development strategies based on reviewing work that has been completed and items still left to do. We expect to bring a report back to Council in January 2018 for information.

### **Airport Feasibility Study**

EDO Chris Watson is leading the airport feasibility study, and we are currently reviewing a draft of the study. The scope of the study was to develop recommendations on increasing the viability of the Goderich and Wingham airports. We expect the final report to be released in December.

### **Quarterly BIA-Chambers-EDO Meeting**

We held our quarterly BIA-Chambers-EDO meeting in October. This event is an important opportunity for core people working in the economic development space to share information, develop partnerships, and share best practices. We also used this opportunity to obtain feedback on what Municipal EDOs, Chambers, and BIAs most needed from the County Economic Development department. The overwhelming message was the need for regular communications and an up-to-date business directory. More information to follow in the Department work plan.

### **School Visits**

SBC Coordinator Nicki Darbyson and EDO Chris Watson have been conducting visits to schools to talk about entrepreneurship, local job opportunities in Huron County, and programs and services offered through the Huron County Economic Development Department's Small Business Centre.

## Upcoming Projects/Initiatives

<b><i>Timeline</i></b>	<b><i>Project/Initiative</i></b>
<i>Ongoing</i>	Workshop & Networking Events
<i>Nov-2018 &amp; Ongoing</i>	Employer Roundtable
<i>Dec-17</i>	Agri-Food Economic Development Work Plan to Council
<i>Dec-17</i>	Huron Manufacturers Association - Sustainability Focus
<i>Dec-17</i>	Airport Feasibility Study finalization
<i>2018</i>	BIA/Chambers Visits by EcDev Staff
<i>Jan-18</i>	'Not Just Another' Job Fair in London
<i>Jan-18</i>	Develop New Memorandum of Understandings with RTO4
<i>Feb-18</i>	Workforce Attraction & Retention Strategy
<i>Feb-18</i>	Community Engagement Forum (re: Newcomers)
<i>Early 2018</i>	EcDev Web Presence Review
<i>Early to Mid-2018</i>	Newcomer Awareness Local Marketing Campaign
<i>Mar-18</i>	Rental Registry - Crowdsourcing information
<i>Mid 2018</i>	Investment Attraction - Planning to Develop Strategy

## Huron County Economic Development Department – Staff Directory

<p><b>Nicki Darbyson</b> SBC Coordinator (519) 524-8394, Ext 3304</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social Enterprises</li> <li>- Summer Company Program</li> <li>- Events &amp; Workshops</li> </ul>	<p><b>Patrick Donnelly</b> SBC Coordinator (519) 524-8394, Ext 3307</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food &amp; Agri Businesses</li> <li>- Tourism Businesses</li> <li>- Arts &amp; Culture Businesses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Kim Postma</b> SBC Coordinator (519) 524-8394, Ext 3302</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manufacturing Businesses</li> <li>- BIA/Chambers Liaison</li> <li>- Starter Plus Grants</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kristin Crane</b> Immigration Liaison (519) 525-5947</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local Immigration Partnership</li> <li>- Newcomer/Migration</li> <li>- Settlement Matters</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scott Currie</b> Communications &amp; Marketing (519) 525-5175</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism Sector Development</li> <li>- Marketing &amp; Communications</li> <li>- Social Media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Chris Watson</b> Economic Development Officer (519) 440-1463</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Land Development</li> <li>- Investment Attraction</li> <li>- Workforce Attraction &amp; Retention</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sue Little</b> Office Administrator (519) 524-8394, Ext 3242</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administration</li> <li>- Front Desk &amp; Reception</li> <li>- Payables &amp; Payroll</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mark Hussey</b> Web/Multi Media Developer (519) 955-1468</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Websites</li> <li>- Multimedia</li> <li>- Newsletters</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cody Joudry</b> A/Dir. of Economic Development (519) 440-2385</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Departmental Team Lead</li> <li>- Agri-Food Sector Development</li> </ul>