

## NORTH HURON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Since our meeting Dec 7 I have talked to business people whom have tried to develop business in North Huron and gave up due to obstacles. Someone with an idea in their head is generally impatient, and would like to thiervision in place and tested out as soon as possible. This said, the idea and money will be taken elsewhere if they hear too many NO's. This was the case of two of the people I talked to. The complaint is that council will delay a decision or await other levels of gov. for input or approvals rather than help clear the path forward. Sometimes they seem to be frozen by a fear of liability.

As an economic development commitee , our job should be to draw out these people with ideas and work with them to knock down trivial blockages and find the shortest, fastest and cheapest path through the essential requirements.

I see this starting by talking directly one on one to existing business in North Huron to see what holds them back and what future dreams they might have.

Those new to business are in a different class. Thier easiest way in is probably through renting a location or taking over an existing business with a fresh outlook. Even this plan is hard if the landlord wants a lease with too long a term. A few days ago I talked to a local man who works in mall management for a huge property developer. I was supriised to hear how many styles of leases, from strait monthly rent , to % of sales only , or a combination which is most common. A % of sales lease would be a low risk choice for someone starting out, and fill otherwise empty space on Main streets.

As for what businesses might work we have to ask those who are willing to spend thier money. I've heard we need a nicer coffee spot since Coffee Culture closed, a different class of restaurant, somewhere to buy metric bolts, local made furniture, and better access to local farm products. These wishes can only be found by talking to locals. Surveys are not filled in by the majority and can be highjacked by special interests. Whether a business based on the wants of people would make money and prosper is not under our control or our concern.

So my conclusion of this ramble is, directly help business get through their roadblocks, develop a low risk, low investment template for new ideas to be tried out, and get a feel for what the local audience would like to see and support with their purchases. The last two should be advertised to the public of North Huron and wider

Murray Simpson

Jan 2, 2018