

DEPARTMENTAL REPORT

Department: Economic Development

Month: March 2024

Funding Opportunities

- The EDO and Supervisor of Community and Recreation are exploring grants related to increasing resources and programming aimed at older adults and seniors.
- Application submitted in early March to Ontario Trillium Foundation for potential renovations at the Recreation Complex.

Community Improvement Plan

- 2024 applications to the CIP Program are open and being advertised in Buzz on Business Newsletter.
- Several inquiries have come in from local land and business owners about the Tax Increment Grants for possible upcoming projects. It is shaping up to be a competitive year for the CIP Grants Program!
- Six Welcome Bags have gone out to new residents in the area, with seven more already requested for the end of April.

Business Development

- The EDO continues to encourage all business owners to ensure their listing information is up to date. Radio ad campaign is currently running and will continue to run on an ongoing basis around other special event campaigns to advertise the directory and to bring local businesses into compliance with the Business Registration By-law 1816.
- New *Shop Local* billboard was installed in late February at corner of Hwy 6/Centre St and McCulloch Drive.
- The Town has partnered with the Unifor (Domtar) Action Centre to offer a schedule of five presentations by local service providers and funders on how to start a small business and what resources are available to entrepreneurs in our area. The event will be held on April 2nd at the Recreation Complex from 3-7pm and is open to the public.

Community Development

- Plans are in the works for a 2nd Annual Youth Career Expo for May 7th, 2024. EcDev will be collaborating with the Unifor Action Centre on this event as it's scheduled just a few weeks before the last round of Domtar layoffs.

- Other events with the Action Centre are also in the works. Some will be open to the community at large, while others are for affected workers specifically. The Town continues to support the Action Centre with in-kind contributions where possible.
- EDO continues to participate in discussions with community groups, external employers, provincial ministries, financial services, social and health services, and others to coordinate efforts and support for Domtar employees as they navigate the idling and layoff process.
- Age-Friendly Action Plan is coming to Council on March 26th Kim Goodman of KA Community Consulting providing a final presentation for the Espanola Plan.
 - This project is on track to wrap up a few days ahead of the March 31st deadline set by the Province of Ontario in the funding agreement.
 - The goal of this plan is to provide the Town and its leadership with the information necessary to make accessibility a part of any program, service, or building's initial design phase.

Marketing

- Repairs to the municipal directional sign at the south-west corner of Centre St & Second St have been completed by Public Works and the sign was reinstalled at the end of February. In all, the sign was only down for a few weeks. Thanks go to Public Works for their quick fixing!
- The tourism swag line at the Library had excellent sales in 2023. The hope is to continue promoting Espanola with apparel and other fun items!

Department Manager: L. Orford

Submitted on: March 22, 2024