

Review of Resources and Roles Related to Community and Economic Development

for the



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1 Purpose

As part of McSweeney & Associates' assignment with Brighton, we were tasked with:

- Examining the resources available;
- Assessing the current contributions/roles of the municipality and its economic development partners; and
- Making recommendations on any gaps or overlaps in light of the recommended Community Development Plan.

2 Current Resources

The Municipality of Brighton currently supports community and economic development with a combination of internal resources supplemented with financial resources provided to external agencies.

In 2011, the internal resources included:

- One staff person with a main focus on community-related work, as well as some other municipal work such as website maintenance and general marketing and communications;
- Approximately \$20,000 in tourism and promotional budgets;
- In 2012, there is a proposed capital budget of \$20,000 (net) to support the visitor welcome signage program.

Brighton is currently purchasing services from several external partner organizations:

The Brighton & District Chamber of Commerce - \$30,000 annually

The Municipality of Brighton held a Municipal Service Contract with the Brighton & District Chamber of Commerce to operate a Tourism Information Centre. The contract expired December 31, 2011. Services to be provided by the Chamber included:

- Assisting with the updating and maintenance of the Municipality of Brighton website;
- Distribution of Visitor's Guides, pamphlets, brochures, and other promotional material;
- Operation of the Tourist Information Centre (open 5 days per week in the winter months and 7 days per week plus two evenings during the summer months);
- Providing washrooms to the public for Applefest & Wednesday evening Concerts in the Park;
- Providing year round internet access on two computers available to tourists and the general public;
- Assisting the Community Development Officer with Quinte Business Achievement Awards nomination committee criteria and other associated items as directed by the Community Development Officer;
- Attending Northumberland Tourism Meetings;

- Payment of membership, associated expenses, and attendance at Quinte Tourism Council Meetings;
- Contacting local tourism operators with information from The Bay of Quinte Tourism, Northumberland Tourism and Ontario Tourism; and
- Providing subsidized space for County of Northumberland to operate Community Counseling services, Community Policing and computer courses for seniors through the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board.

Quinte Economic Development Commission (QEDC) - \$20,255 in 2011

Brighton is one of three municipalities that have contributed to the QEDC for a number of years, Quinte West and Belleville being the other two. The following services are being provided by the QEDC:

- Providing investment attraction and retention services - exposure to prospective investors from a wide geographic area (listed on the QEDC website, exposure at national/international shows, joint marketing, etc.);
- Providing access to training funds by Brighton companies (more than \$19,400 in direct funding in the past 2.5 years, resulting in more than \$60,000 total invested in training to Brighton companies);
- Providing linkages to provincial and federal agencies;
- The commissioning of regional studies;
- Providing local assistance as required;
- Creation of the Manufacturing Resource Centre for local manufacturers.

Ontario East Economic Development - \$3,500 annually

Brighton's contribution to Ontario East Economic Development Commission for participation in the Creative Economy Sector Team provides them with a listing (which is currently non-functional) on the Ontario East website, Creative Economy Key Sector information (also non-functional) on the Ontario East site, and representation at any initiatives/tradeshows Ontario East is involved in.

Bay of Quinte Tourism - \$850 annually

The contribution to Bay of Quinte Tourism provides Brighton with tourism promotion through their website and other promotional activities. The Brighton & District Chamber of Commerce represented Brighton at Bay of Quinte Tourism meetings as part of their expired Municipal Service Contract to provide tourism services.

County of Northumberland

Through County tax levies, Brighton ratepayers contribute to the County economic development and tourism budgets. However, Brighton's economic orientation is towards Quinte West and Belleville rather than the remainder of Northumberland County.

3 Observations

1. Brighton is part of the Northumberland regional economy, but it is clearly more closely aligned with the Quinte West/Belleville economies than to other local economies in Northumberland County. For example, less than 15% of Brighton's labour force work in Northumberland County (outside of Brighton), and less than 12% of Brighton jobs are held by non-Brighton Northumberland residents. Conversely, 48% of Brighton's workers commute to work in Quinte West or Belleville, while 24% of Brighton jobs are held by residents of those two communities.
2. Year-round Tourist Information Centre services provided by the Chamber appear to represent good value. The Centre is centrally located in a high traffic and very visible area – a change to a less visible location would inhibit the Centre's effectiveness. The Municipality could not cost-effectively provide a similar level of service with internal resources, particularly considering the administrative and management burden that would be involved.
3. There is a very strong trend to cooperative/collaborative investment attraction marketing in Ontario, and throughout North America and the world. The QEDC contribution represents excellent value in investment attraction and retention services, and Brighton's relatively small contribution is also highly leveraged by the QEDC. Brighton would be less effective providing these services with internal resources at multiples of the current cost. Unfortunately, Brighton has not taken the necessary steps to ensure an adequate supply of serviced employment lands, and therefore is not taking full advantage of the QEDC investment attraction and retention services.
4. The Ontario East Creative Economy Sector does not appear to represent good value at this time¹, but could be re-considered at some point in the future.
5. The Bay of Quinte Tourism participation also represents good value, but its value could be increased if the tourism website was much more complete (in terms of Brighton's tourism offerings). There is an opportunity to drive much greater value out of this partnership².
6. While Brighton's contribution to the Northumberland County economic development budget cannot be ignored, it is noted that Brighton has limited economic connectivity with Northumberland as compared to Quinte West and Belleville.
7. A review of the job description for the Community Development Officer position indicates that there is very little focus on actual economic development. Some level of effort is being expended on municipal corporate support such as website maintenance, municipal

¹ To obtain value from Ontario East sector partnerships requires a level of effort from each participating municipality – something that is not easy for Brighton at this time given its limited resources which should be dedicated to higher level priorities. Brighton could however monitor the successes of this Ontario East sector group to determine if continued participation becomes warranted.

² The cost of entry and participation is very low. The value of participation could however be increased by ensuring that all Brighton tourism assets, attractions and events receive exposure on the website.

corporate marketing and communications, and administrative overhead. The level of effort dedicated to festivals and events and to support committees is very significant.

8. Overall, services provided by external service providers are cost-effective, while Brighton needs to dedicate more significant effort on the actual community and economic development of Brighton as outlined in the Community Development Plan.

4 Recommended Partner/Brighton Roles

4.1 Tourism³

1. Tourism marketing and promotion can be most efficiently handled by Northumberland Tourism and Bay of Quinte Tourism, as well as RTO #8. The Municipality of Brighton is best positioned, if properly resourced, to liaise with Northumberland Tourism and Bay of Quinte Tourism.
2. Brighton's role in tourism should focus on project management related to the development of Brighton's tourism product offering, and Brighton should be involved in tourism marketing and promotion by liaising with Northumberland Tourism and Bay of Quinte Tourism.
3. Tourism visitor and information services should continue to be provided cost-effectively by the Chamber of Commerce through the operation of the Tourist Information Centre. Their role within tourism should be revised to discontinue the provision of liaison services with Northumberland Tourism and Bay of Quinte Tourism, and ensuring their websites adequately present Brighton's tourism offering.

4.2 Investment Attraction

1. Investment attraction efforts by the QEDC provide the best value for Brighton – except that Brighton has not ensured a sufficient supply of employment lands to take advantage of this annual investment. Assuming that Brighton does wish to attract investment (the Community Development Plan recommends investment attraction and employment growth), then Brighton needs to continue to support the QEDC.
2. Brighton's role, however, is to take action to provide serviced employment lands.

³ Subsequent to the completion of this report, it is the consultant's understanding that the Brighton Arts Council has become more involved in providing regional tourism as well as visitor and information services through the "Gates" program.

4.3 Economic Development & Community Development

As noted, considerable Brighton resources have been dedicated to supporting festivals, events, and committees. There needs to be a greater emphasis on improving the Brighton product offering for visitors, current businesses, potential investors, as well as residents. This is largely the focus of the Community Development Plan – and its implementation will require human and financial resources to implement. This is a higher priority than community festivals and events support.

It is recommended that:

1. The role of the current Community Development Officer position:
 - a. Be refocused to remove corporate support functions (website maintenance, corporate marketing and communications), and to remove as much “administrative burden” as possible;
 - b. Be tasked with the lead responsibility for project management – specifically responsible and accountable for implementing (or ensuring implementation) of the Community Development Plan;
2. An additional human resource position be created and tasked with the festival and events support work, corporate support functions (website maintenance, corporate marketing and communications), much of the committee liaison work (not including the BEDC) as well as liaison with Northumberland Tourism and Bay of Quinte Tourism to ensure their websites and marketing material adequately present Brighton’s tourism offering. This position should ensure that Brighton is actively engaged in initiatives resulting from these tourism partnerships. This additional resource should be mandatory if the Municipality of Brighton wishes to continue supporting festival and events as well as liaising with Northumberland Tourism and Bay of Quinte Tourism.

4.4 Brighton Economic Development Committee

1. That the Brighton Economic Development Committee membership be reconstructed and rebuilt and their new mandate be re-focused on implementation of the Community Development Plan. Members are to be considered “doers” and should include champions and economic development stakeholders capable and dedicated to inspiring community and municipal implementation of all aspects and themes of the Community Development Plan. The Brighton Economic Development Committee should be supported by the Brighton Community Development Officer.