

Quarterly Update Report

Title: Strategic Initiatives Quarter 1 2024 - Progress Report

Report Number: Strategic Initiatives Quarterly Report-2024-02

Meeting Date: Wednesday, April 24, 2024

This report provides an update on the activities completed by the Strategic Initiatives Department in the first quarter of 2024.

Communications

- The organization's need for communications support continues to be busy. Submission of communications forms totaled 187 requests from across the organization in the first quarter of 2024:
 - January 1st to 30th – 51
 - February 1st to 29th – 71
 - March 1st to 31st – 65
- Support of 2024 tourism marketing initiatives leading up to the hiring of staff was a priority this quarter. Collaborative work with the Letter M marketing agency saw our department leading consultations with key stakeholders and generating content for multiple platforms, both print and digital, to be launched in the second quarter of the year.
- Specific development of content for the 2024 Visitor's Guide, which we are partnering with the Kincardine Independent on, showcases our community and its events featuring the new "It's right here" theme.
- The development and release of seven how-to PDF documents internally provides support for staff in creating accessible documents in both Word and PowerPoint.
- Successful completion of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Gender Based Analysis Plus course provided excellent insight on how to incorporate more inclusive and equitable elements into our communications.
- The Secord Monument Public Engagement requires a monumental amount of thoughtful and careful communications. A focus on the development of support documentation in both print and digital formats were critical components to the integrity of this initiative. Monitoring of online discussion on Municipal platforms to ensure compliance with our social media guidelines proved to be intense and informative.

Continuing to develop content and provide communications support as we move through the next phases of the engagement.

- Continued work on the development of both the new Municipal and new tourism websites is a primary focus for communications. Please see the website report on the agenda for greater details about this project.

Economic Development

Investment and Business Attraction

- Completed a new “Invest in the Municipality of Kincardine” document to assist with investment and business attraction (see Attachment 1).
- Working on an official launch and media release in May to promote this new initiative.
- Continued efforts around investment attraction and business expansion. Conducted over 20 meetings and communications exchange since January 2024 for new businesses and developers interested in the community.
- Completed 7 business recognition certificates and Council photos ops so far in 2024.

Development Supports

- Organized 2 afternoon workshops (the 1st in January and a follow-up workshop in April) with members of the Bruce County planning department and our municipal development team to discuss and create an aligned vision on Future Growth and Development in the municipality. The workshops identified some key priority areas and actions.
- Coordinated monthly meetings with the internal development team, including preparing agendas, identifying issues or opportunities, and organizing speakers for topics of interest.
- Advancing work on the Housing Action Plan, including attending the Bruce County Housing Forum, arranging meetings with organizations like Habitat for Humanity, Community Living and the Women’s Shelter and engaging with some developers who may be interested in exploring affordable or supportive housing development.

Nuclear Sector

- Attended the Canadian Nuclear Association (CNA) conference in Ottawa to meet and network with individuals and companies in the industry and learn more about key initiatives currently underway. Also attended the full day CANHC AGM, while at the conference.
- Organized quarterly meetings with Bruce Power staff and recently organized a meeting with senior officials of Bruce Power.
- Met with some key nuclear suppliers at CNA and continue to arrange follow-up meetings to obtain updates from these companies, share information on what the MOK is working on and continue to understand their needs in the area and how to better support the industry.
- Attended the Clean Energy Summit, OCNI events, Bruce C workshops, CNSC meetings and various webinar events to learn more about the industry and nuclear isotopes.

Business supports

- Received approval for the new Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and working through the program implementation details, including identifying priorities for 2024.
- As part of the CIP program and Spruce the Bruce community onboarding, working with Pl.ural Consulting to develop community branding and façade guidelines for Tiverton. Held an open house on Thursday, February 1st to gather initial community feedback.
- Planned and hosted another successful Job Fair and Career Expo, in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce. This year's event had 32 participating businesses and approximately 300 attendees.
- Provided secretary support for the monthly BIA Board meetings and attended the quarterly meetings of the Kincardine and District Chamber of Commerce.

Downtown Dig

- Although much of the Downtown Dig project is complete, we continue to provide periodic updates on the project and are working with operations staff on the downtown streetscape items.
- Collaborating with the BIA and Blackburn on a new radio campaign titled "Refresh in Lakeside Downtown Kincardine" that will run May 13th – May 31st, with a grand prize draw and morning show appearance taking place on May 31st. Over 22 businesses are participating in this promotion that was funded through the business supports budget, to promote downtown Kincardine and increase shoulder season visitors.
- Our communications for the downtown dig project are highly recognized by communities throughout southern Ontario that are preparing for downtown construction projects. To date, over 10 communities have reached out to arrange meetings, tour our downtown, and obtain staff feedback on our best practices and lessons learned.

Physician recruitment and retention

Current Status

- 10 physicians currently make up the Kincardine Family Health Organization (KFHO, also known as the Kincardine Physicians Group), with 14,500 attached patients.
- Estimates show another possible 3000 unattached people without a family doctor in our area. Plus, future growth in population.
- 16 physicians at minimum are needed now to serve our growing population, work ER and provide hospital inpatient coverage.
- With 4 new physicians planning to start work in 2024, 1 physician transitioning to full time emergency room work, and one physician leaving in June. Kincardine will have an estimated 12 physicians working as family physicians by the end of 2024.
- Urgently need to recruit 4 or more family physicians.

Recruitment Events

- Attended the following recruitment events:
 - The Family Medicine Residents of Western Retreat (Jan - Grand Bend ON)

- Career MD Rural Ontario Medical Retreat (Apr – Rochester NY)

Recruitment work

Kincardine applied to a new ministry program called Practice Ready Ontario (PRO), a new government program to streamline the integration of Internationally Trained Physicians (ITPs) into high need communities in Ontario. Their target in Ontario is to bring up to 50 candidates each year to practice medicine. We were fortunate to receive candidates and are currently working through this process in the hopes of having a physician complete their 3-year return of service under supervision of a local physician. If successful they would be taking on new patients, working hospitalist inpatient care and ER shifts. It has been a competitive process with more community applications than candidates.

Regional recruitment

There have also been many regional recruitment efforts made this year. Including:

- The Grey Bruce Rural Medicine Retreat: will be hosted in Owen Sound this summer, with 7 communities in Grey and Bruce working together to bring physicians to Bruce County.
- Saugeen Shores: engaged in ongoing talks of a potential new health care partnership between communities. Collaborated on creating a gap analysis of health care in both communities.
- SOPRA Southern Ontario Physician Recruitment Association: the Municipality joined this regional group that includes 17 physician recruiters representing their individual areas but working together to leverage international reach. Through attendance at international expos, all community contacts are listed on marketing material. All individual community leads are shared with the group, allowing for a reach that one community alone would not have capacity for. These recruitment events showcased our community, produced many excellent leads, and collected hundreds of contacts.

Locum recruitment

- As both recruitment and retention efforts, there have been 8 locum doctors recruited to work at the medical clinic, in 2024 so far. These locums provided coverage for physicians to work in the hospital, ER shifts or vacation coverage.

Marketing

- Work continues to build a competitive marketing strategy to attract doctors, including social media ad campaigns, in person recruitment events, banners, advertisements Society of Rural Physicians of Canada, presence in ROMP (Rural Ontario Medical Program), video production (which was developed by Bruce Power) <https://f.io/0ThQ3zDE>, promotion of Job postings with Health Force Ontario, webpage for Physician Recruitment on the municipal site.

Job postings

- Physician postings have been placed on multiple platforms including the SOPRA job board, Health Force Ontario site, Family Physician Job Opportunities FB page, Municipal website, social media, and Family Health Team pages, Practice link.

Onboarding support for new physicians

- Work continues to onboard newly signed physicians. This is a crucial part of the process, ensuring that everything is seamlessly ready for the physician.
- This work includes planning events to meet the team, ensuring clinic space is ready and equipped as advertised, Ministry paperwork, accommodations acquired, staff hired, information on the rostering process, spousal employment, school tours, day care placements and other needs as they arise. We want them to feel welcome and part of our community as soon as possible!

Retention support

- Retention work is ongoing, and a very important part of the physician recruitment and retention program. The commitment to providing a turnkey clinic is a critical piece to recruiting and retaining physicians for our community.

Hawthorne Community Clinic

- The municipally owned medical clinic continues to be maintained and improved by the Municipality, which is foundational for both recruitment and retention of physicians.

Locum Houses

- Housing is provided for locums, medical residents and their families through the generous support of The Society of United Professionals, who have purchased two homes in Kincardine in 2014 and have leased them to the Municipality of Kincardine at no cost for 10 years. There is work currently happening on a lease renewal.

ER Program

- The ER program has allowed for the use of a \$500/shift stipend to be paid to locums or physicians completing third year of residency to work shifts in the Kincardine ER. It has been successful in helping keep the ER open.

Nurse Practitioner (NP) support

- The Family Health Team same day clinic with 2 Nurse Practitioners and support staff at the medical clinic are helping divert Emergency Room visits and supports patients access to primary care. The municipality provides 60% funding of one full time NP.
- A new NP was recruited and is working for the Kincardine Family Health Organization, covering a personal leave.

Education Programs

- There have been 7 visiting physicians completing their rural residency rotation in Kincardine so far this year. Each resident physician completes two months of primary care, hospital inpatient care and emergency room work.
- A Kincardine Residency program proposal to host 2-4 resident physicians has been developed and is being sent to universities for consideration of the 2025 CaRMS. The retention rate of similar programs is 80-90%.

Tourism

Two staff were hired and began work on March 12, 2024. Kirston Zandwyk and Merisa Kriwez will support the tourism special events, Welcome Centre, marketing and promotions and volunteer management until September 31, 2024.

Welcome Centre

Plans are underway to reopen the Welcome Centre for the season on May 22nd. Hours are Monday to Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. from the May long weekend through to Labour Day. Plans for minor renovations are taking place to create a welcoming and vibrant space for residents and visitors.

Tourism Marketing Campaign

Worked with the Letter M, a well-respected marketing and branding agency to develop a marketing campaign for 2024.

The objectives of the marketing campaign are to:

- Bring residents back downtown and encourage stronger affinity for local tourism assets.
- Encourage increased tourism including:
 - a. Longer term stays (from day to weekend; weekend to week).
 - b. Higher per-visitor spend in the community.
 - c. Strong shoulder season (spring, fall) participation.

The brand will continue to build on the Kincardine's Scottish positioning with a sense of humour, strong visuals and local engagement. Based on research and stakeholder input, the campaign is built on the following brand assets:

1. Lakeside – a premium but quieter Ontario location for beach, sun, sand, boardwalk, and a top Canadian surfing destination with the most desirable conditions in spring and fall.
2. Nature – a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts with plenty of options for camping, biking and hiking on kilometers of trails, with vibrant fall colours a natural attraction.

3. Downtown – a lively Ontario small town downtown with locally-owned dining and retail shops, the anchor for many signature festivals (Scottish, Bluesfest) and an easy walk to the beach – somewhat unique amongst Ontario beach towns.
4. Food hub – the region has strong agricultural roots, popular farms, plentiful fresh local produce, food shops and farmers markets, and excellent dining options.
5. Rich heritage – a distinctive, well-known brand built around strong Scottish roots and Saturday pipers/parade, as well as the lighthouse and marine museum, historic well-kept properties, etc. Plenty of storytelling opportunities are present.
6. Welcoming – The community has a reputation for being friendly, inclusive, genuine, warm and unpretentious; a quieter beach, festival or nature holiday than busier/more crowded destinations in the region.

The underlying theme of the campaign is that **“It’s Right Here!”**

This work has also included the development of several products including: blogs, videos, posters, calendar and rack card templates etc.

Murals, Banners and Seasonal Lights

- Work to repair the lights on Harbour Street and in Bankers Alley took place this past winter. After several attempts they have been repaired and are functional once again.
- Work to refresh light pole banners in downtown Tiverton and Kincardine for both the summer and Remembrance Day months has been initiated.
- Work to refresh the mural on Harbour Street has been initiated with the completion goal of June 2024.

Special Events

Special events bring a vibrancy and sense of connection to a community. They also draw visitors to the area and provide economic, recreation, and culture benefits to the community.

There are many special events happening all year long throughout the Municipality of Kincardine which the Tourism office promotes to visitors and residents. Some of these events are hosted by the Municipality. The events happen in parks, in recreation facilities, on streets and on trails.

Currently we are working with community members and staff to plan and implement the following municipal sponsored events:

- “Always Welcome” Event will kick off the summer on June 1st and serve as the grand opening of the Welcome Centre
- 2024 Canada Day Weekend Celebrations will take place in Tiverton and in Kincardine this year.
- Cruise Nights every Friday of the long weekends. There will be a special guest at the August 2nd Cruise Night with expanded times and activities.

- Kincardine Scottish Pipe Band will return this year every Saturday from June 22th to August 31st.
- Kincardine Scottish Pipe Band 33rd Annual Gathering of the Bands will take place on Saturday, August 24th.
- The Phantom Piper will play every evening during July and August (except for Saturdays). To promote the Phantom Piper a [video](#) was created in collaboration with [JOI Creative](#).
- Marine Heritage Day will be held on August 24th and includes tours of the Kincardine Lighthouse, the Walker House Museum, kids' craft table and scavenger hunt, as well as beach safety information displays.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access

Awareness: Build awareness and understanding to address inclusion, diversity, equity and access

- Promote dates of significance to acknowledge, create awareness and celebrate the diversity of our community through social media and other communication methods.
- Helping to plan and implement the Multicultural Festival on May 14, 2024
- Hosting Rainbow Pride workshops in June
- Supporting and will participate in the Pride celebration on June 22nd
- Supporting the Hindu Culture Open House on August 17.
- Working with community partners to host the 2024 Welcome Event on September 17, during Welcoming Week. Welcoming Week is celebrated in communities to encourage connection and support relationships with newcomers. Newcomer to Canada, Grey, Bruce, or the Municipality of Kincardine were invited to learn about services in the community and to meet new people.
- Meetings have been taking place with community partners to plan for the 2nd annual Afro Caribbean Awards for youth that will be held on October 26, 2024.
- The public engagement process began in this quarter to inform Council's decision making regarding the future location of the Secord Monument that was displaced during the downtown dig. A public survey was conducted to inform the engagement process and 475 people participated. Research on history and timelines is in process and planning for small community conversations is underway. A [website page](#), Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and background information were created in response to the public input.

Service: Facilitate social inclusion, access and participation in programs, services and the built environment

- Participated in the Grey-Bruce Immigration Partnership.
- Completed the welcome package for Immigrants and refugees moving to the Municipality. It will be posted when the new website goes live.

Reconciliation: Work towards actions to address truth, healing and reconciliation.

- Developed plans to host training sessions (learning circles) on the History of the land from a First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspective as well as developing meaningful relationships with the Indigenous community.
- Worked with a trainer to plan for two learning circles in July 2024.

Strategic Planning

- Held one meeting with the Council Strategic Planning Working Group.
 - Drafted a Community Profile of the Municipality of Kincardine
 - Researched potential facilitators for strategic planning sessions
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