

# Quarterly Update Report

**Title:** Strategic Initiatives Department Quarterly Update 2024

**Report Number:** Strategic Initiatives Quarterly Report-2024-03

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, August 28, 2024

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This report provides an update on the activities completed by the Strategic Initiatives up until the end of August 2024.

## Tourism

Contract staff have been supporting seasonal tourism special events, the staffing of the Welcome Centre, marketing and promotions and volunteer management.

### Welcome Centre

The Welcome Centre opened for the season on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The hours are Monday to Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. from the May long weekend through to Labour Day. Minor renovations were made to the Welcome Centre including new counter, brochure racks and other promotional products to promote the community's assets.

The feedback on the re-location of the Welcome Centre from the highway to the Kincardine Centre for the Arts, 707 Queen Street, has been positive. Visitors expressed appreciation for the Centre being located downtown where it is accessible and visible.

The Welcome Centre shares the facility with the Victoria Gallery & Gift Shop, Kincardine Scottish Festival and the Kincardine Theatre Guild. This arrangement has provided opportunities for cross-promotion and collaboration.

### Beach Wheelchair

The beach wheelchair is available to borrow for free from Victoria Day to Labour Day through the Welcome Centre.

The chair has been borrowed 6 times during this quarter in addition to being set up on display at the Always Welcome event as part of the Accessibility Advisory Committees tent.

### Tourism Marketing

The marketing campaign designed by the Letter M, a well-respected marketing and branding agency was implemented in May.

The objectives of the marketing campaign were to:

- Bring residents back downtown and encourage stronger affinity for local tourism
- 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 focus of the campaign has been on the lakeside, nature, downtown businesses and restaurants, markets, heritage, special events and welcoming people to the community.

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

- Several new products were developed including: blogs, videos, posters, community calendar and rack card templates etc.
- Our Youtube and google metrics have been performing beyond expectation. A gentleman was in from Michigan and mentioned that he planned his stay after seeing our online advertisements.
- Our new tourism website [www.kincardinewelcomes.ca](http://www.kincardinewelcomes.ca) launched this spring. It has grown over the season to represent Kincardine Tourism and be a helpful tool for tourists.
- Two new videos are being created for future promotions: cruise nights and the Kincardine Scottish Pipe Band.

### Social Media

- Age and gender demographics are on par for campaign’s target audience.
- Meta analytics have drastically improved their reach this season. META reach this quarter is 323.4K, compared to 23.9K last quarter, and 39.4K this quarter last year. Kincardine Tourism now performs comparably to other tourism information centres in Ontario.
- 16% of visitors who entered the Welcome Centre during this quarter heard about us through social media.

### 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 have been many special events that have occurred in this quarter. The Tourism office promotes community events to visitors and residents. Some of these events are hosted by the Municipality. Staff have been working with community volunteers to plan and implement the following municipal sponsored events:

- Worked with the BIA to develop an agreement to coordinate the Monday Markets in the Park.
- Hosted the “Always Welcome” Event on June 1<sup>st</sup> to kick off the summer season and served as the grand opening of the Welcome Centre.

- 2024 Canada Day Weekend Celebrations took place in Tiverton and in Kincardine this year. Festivities in Tiverton took place on June 30, 2024, in partnership with the Tiverton Lions, and featured family activities, BBQ by the Lions, vendors, touch a truck and a movie night. July 1<sup>st</sup> activities took place in MacPherson Park and were kicked off with a parade, family activities and ended with a fireworks display.
- Two Cruise Nights were held on the Friday of the July and August long weekends. At the August 2<sup>nd</sup> Cruise Night there were expanded times and activities and featured special guest Grand Marshal Dennis Gage, host of [My Classic Car](#), generously sponsored by Steve Plunkett.
- The first Cruise Night saw 340 cars and motorcycles with approximately 5500 people in attendance. The second Cruise night started with a rainstorm and therefore numbers were lower than the first Cruise Night with 250 vehicles with approximately 2500 in attendance.
- The Kincardine Scottish Pipe Band has been parading every Saturday starting June 22<sup>th</sup> and will continue to August 31<sup>st</sup>.
- The Phantom Piper has been playing every evening during July and August (except for Saturdays). To promote the Phantom Piper a [video](#) was created in collaboration with [JOI Creative](#).
- Working with a volunteer group, plans to host the Kincardine Scottish Pipe Band 33rd Annual Gathering of the Bands have been taking place. The event will take place on Saturday, August 24th.
- Work to plan for Marine Heritage Day is taking place. The event will take place on August 24<sup>th</sup> and includes tours of the Kincardine Lighthouse, the Walker House Museum, kids' craft table and scavenger hunt, as well as beach safety information.
- Plans are underway to join in with the Kincardine Ag Society's Fall Fair on August 30 to welcome in the fall.

## **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. Target audience is both the public and staff.
- Helped to plan and implement the Multicultural Festival on May 14, 2024
- Hosted a Rainbow Pride registration workshops on June 27<sup>th</sup> to provide information on how to become Rainbow Registered.
- Supported and participated in the Pride celebration on June 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Supported the planning and development of materials and activities for the Hindu Culture Open House which was held on August 17. The event featured activities, performances and food and had approximately 350 people in attendance.
- Meetings have been taking place with community partners to plan for the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Afro Caribbean Awards for youth that will be held on October 26, 2024.

- Developed resource material and displays for public awareness building on the topics of Black History Month, International Women’s Day, National Indigenous History month, Pride month, Emancipation Day, Hinduism.
- Developed a prompt for discussion document based on immigration and ethnocultural statistics to be used during the Welcoming Event in September 2024.
- The public engagement process regarding the Secord monument was completed this quarter and the facilitator Dr. Laura Mae Lindo, presented what she heard through this process to Council on July 24, 2024. The intention of the information gathered from the public to inform Council’s decision making regarding the future location of the Secord Monument that was displaced during the downtown dig. A [website page](#), Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and background information have been updated on an ongoing basis 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.
- Currently 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.

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

- Hosted a learning circle on the significance of the sun on July 1 in Victoria Park.
- Hosted a training session (learning circles) on the History of the land from a First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspective.
- Invited participation in the opening ceremony for the Always Welcome event from the local Indigenous Community.

## **Murals, Banners, Speakers and Seasonal Lights**

- Created and implemented new banners for downtown Tiverton.
- Work to renew the Remembrance Day banners has been initiated with the Legion.
- Work to refresh the mural on Harbour Street was completed in June 2024.
- Protective coating application for Municipally owned murals began this July and will continue into September.
- An RFP was completed, and a vendor was secured to install a wifi speaker system in downtown Kincardine.

- Two wraps were applied to the Centre for the Arts Garage doors. One with the land acknowledgement and art work created by Geoffrey “Red” George, and the other door has the Progress Pride Flag. The garage doors were unveiled at the Always Welcome Event on June 1<sup>st</sup> to kick off National Indigenous History and Pride month. The doors were featured in a National Magazine [Sign Media Canada — June 10, 2024 \(mailchi.mp\)](#).
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**Photo:** Kincardine Centre for the Arts Garage Doors



## Communications

Communications been in high demand with 314 requests for support from across the organization:

- April 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> – 70
- May 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> – 88
- June 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> – 80
- July 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> – 76

Priority focus was on the development and launching of two websites at the end of April 2024. The corporate website underwent a complete overhaul at [www.kincardine.ca](http://www.kincardine.ca) and our new tourism website [www.kincardinewelcomes.ca](http://www.kincardinewelcomes.ca) both featured efficient and more user-friendly systems. We continue to polish components of both sites throughout the remainder of 2024.

Along with the launch of the new websites, the introduction of a Website Feedback Form was brought to life. A link to it is available in the footer of every page of both sites. This form allows the public to provide feedback on new features and give improvement suggestions. From April 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, we have received 55 responses, allowing us to troubleshoot and make improvements as we continue to work through this process.

The Secord Monument Public Engagement was also underway during this time, with continued development of support documentation along with social media monitoring throughout this period.

## **Economic Development**

### Investment and Business Attraction

- Launched the new “Invest in the Municipality of Kincardine” document to assist with investment and business attraction.
- Working on an official launch and media release to promote this new initiative.
- Continued efforts around investment attraction, business attraction and business expansion. Conducted over 40 meetings and communications exchange since January 2024 for new businesses and developers interested in the community.
- Actively conducting outreach to businesses/companies that we may wish to open a business in the community.
- Attended the EDCO event in Midland to learn from Invest Ontario and participated in a few meetings now to discuss potential investment initiatives for the region.
- Bruce County is hosting an Investment Attraction/ Foreign Direct Investment training session on September 11<sup>th</sup>.

### Development Supports

- Continue to advance actions from the Future Growth and Development workshops that were completed with municipal staff and Bruce County.
- Coordinated monthly meetings with the internal development team, including preparing agendas, identifying issues or opportunities, and organizing speakers for topics of interest.
- Identify and create content for media releases on new large scale developments
- Reviewed Comprehensive Zoning By-law and contributed to staff comments on suggested updates and additions to be included in new by-law, specifically from a housing and business friendly lens.

### Housing

- Meeting regularly with Flourish to provide information on local conditions as part of the community housing project they are completing for MOK
- Continue to meet with community partners like Community Living, the Women’s Shelter, Bruce County Housing staff, Russell Meadows and engaging with some developers to explore affordable or supportive housing development.
- Organizing and hosting a Realtor Roundtable on September 19<sup>th</sup> with local realtors to share MOK updates and gather feedback on key housing and development related issues/opportunities.

### Nuclear Sector

- Attend quarterly meetings with Bruce Power staff
- Continuing to arrange meetings with nuclear suppliers.
- Attend quarterly meeting with the nuclear regulator Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC)
- Involved in the Bruce C project by attended the Impact Assessment Agency & Bruce C workshops, reviewing documents and providing comments (i.e. Initial Project Description)
- Planning and preparing to host the Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities (CANHC) summer meeting in Kincardine on September 6<sup>th</sup>.

## Community Improvement Plan

- Partnered with the County of Bruce and launched additional Spruce the Bruce grants to support downtown Kincardine & downtown Tiverton businesses with the following grants:
  - Façade improvements
  - Signage
  - Patios
  - Awnings
- As of August 13<sup>th</sup>, approximately 25 businesses have expressed interest in the business grants, 14 grant applications have been submitted and 3 have been approved.
- With the new [Community Improvement Plan \(CIP\)](#) approved earlier this year, the Municipality has also promoted that all businesses and commercial property owners in the Municipality can also apply for funding for specific County grants, including:
  - [Agri-Food Innovation](#)
  - [Business Accessibility Improvements](#)
  - [Product and Experience Development](#)
  - [Residential Improvement](#)

## Business supports

- Prepared and published 2 [Economic Development E-newsletters](#) thus far in 2024 to deliver updates on events, supports, grants, and other news of interest to business.
- Completed 16 business recognition certificates and Council photos opportunities.
- Provided secretary support for the monthly BIA Board meetings and attended the quarterly meetings of the Kincardine and District Chamber of Commerce.
- Attend numerous business networking events and gatherings
- As part of the downtown dig business support, worked with Bayshore Broadcasting to deliver a successful the 'Refresh in Lakeside Downtown Kincardine' campaign in May to attract people from the region back to downtown.

## **Physician recruitment and retention**

### Current Status

- Ten (10) physicians currently make up the Kincardine Family Health Organization (KFHO), with 14,500 attached patients.
- Estimates show approx. 3,000 people in region who are without a family doctor.
- Estimate of 16 physicians required to serve current population, work in ER, and provide hospital inpatient coverage.
- 1 physician transitioned from primary care to full time emergency room work.
- 1 physician left Kincardine in June after more than 12 years of service.
- 2 new physicians started work in February and July of 2024.
- 2 more physicians are planning to start work in 2024.
- Kincardine will have an estimated 12 physicians working as family physicians by the end of 2024.



Future population growth will require more physicians.

### Onboarding new physicians

Work continues to onboard newly signed physicians. It 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.

### Locum recruitment

There have been 8 locum doctors recruited to work at the medical clinic in 2024. These locums provided coverage for physicians to work in the hospital, ER shifts or vacation.

### Locum Houses

Having housing available for new or visiting physicians supports programs to allow physicians to provide immediate care in the clinic, ER and hospital.

The Society of United Professionals purchased two homes in Kincardine in 2014 and has leased them to the Municipality of Kincardine for 10 years in exchange for the Municipality providing maintenance and care of the properties. In 10 years, over 300 physicians have stayed at the locum houses. The Society has decided to sell both properties and hopes to continue to support the Physician Recruitment and Retention Program in Kincardine by purchasing two condominiums following the sale of the two houses. A new agreement will be required for Council consideration.

### Regional recruitment

Grey Bruce Primary Care Recruitment Collaborative was created in June 2024 after work the Grey Bruce Owen Sound Recruitment task force ceased operations. The next meeting is in October, and work will focus on collaboration to recruit physicians to our area.

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.

### Healthcare Partnership Program

The Kincardine Saugeen Shores Healthcare Partnership Three Year Pilot Program has received funding from Bruce Power, \$50,000 annually to each community for three years. The goal of the program is that communities are resourced, so every resident has access to a Family Physician.

Current work is focused on recruitment, marketing and promotion. A new video featuring two local physicians is being developed to showcase their professional work and the community.

### ER Program

The ER program has allowed for the use of a \$500/shift stipend funded by the Municipality to be paid to locums or physicians completing third year of residency to work shifts in the Kincardine ER. In April 2023, through the Healthcare Partnership Program, Bruce Power committed \$25,000 a year for 3 years to help support this municipal program.

### Education Programs

There have been 10 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 full time has been developed for consideration by universities for the 2025 CaRMS. The physician retention rate of similar programs is 80-90%.

## **Volunteers**

- Staff worked collaboratively to develop and execute the volunteer campaign for National Volunteer Week which occurred from April 14 - 20.
- A recruitment campaign was launched to recruit volunteers for special events and to staff the Welcome Centre.
- A Volunteer Orientation package was created in consultation with Human Resources.
- 49 volunteers have been recruited for this quarter for tasks in the Welcome Centre, Special Events and Inclusion work.
- Planning to host a volunteer recognition event in September 2024.

## **Strategic Planning**

- Completed a Community Profile of the Municipality of Kincardine (see Attachment 1).
- Assisted Linton Consulting to promote the resident and staff survey to gather input to create a Strategic Action Plan.

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