



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the General Committee

From: Sandra Dueck, Board Chair
Rhonda Keenan, President & CEO
Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development

Report Date: February 8, 2021

Subject: Report PKED21-002
PKED 2020 Fourth Quarter Metrics

Purpose

A report to inform Council of Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development's 2020 Fourth Quarter Metrics.

Recommendation

That Council approve the recommendation outlined in Report PKED 21-002 dated February 8, 2021 of the Board Chair and President & CEO of Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development, as follows:

That Report PKED21-002 and supporting presentation, providing the Peterborough & Kawarthas Economic Development 2020 Fourth Quarter Metrics be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implications

The quarterly metrics do not have financial implications for the City, however the economic uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 global pandemic will have significant financial impacts on PKED, the City and the overall Peterborough business community.

Background

The three-party Memorandum of Understanding agreement between the City, County and Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development (PKED), endorsed by City Council in December 2019, requires PKED to provide quarterly updates to City and County Council.

Analysis

Number of Businesses Started – 7

The impacts of COVID-19 have limited the number of businesses that were launched in Q4, however, despite COVID-19, 7 new businesses were started.

PKED signed an agreement to form a provincial Small Business Enterprise Network with the other Small Business Enterprise Centres from around the Province.

This September, the Business Advisory Centre had 41 Applicants apply online for the Fall intake of our Starter Company Plus program. Fourteen business were accepted into the 6-week entrepreneurship training program. In December 2020, seven businesses were awarded \$36,000 in micro grants. This program was completed virtually, using video meetings for workshops and the participants submitted videos for their final pitch to judges.

The winter 2021 intake applications opened January 1.

This program has been a key stepping-stone for businesses and entrepreneurs looking to grow in the region and since 2017 has resulted in the creation of 74 start-ups and supported 47 business expansions. The program has also seen the opening of 22 brick-and-mortar locations in the region and has created 141 jobs in the local community.

Virtual Advisor services has also been created to provide virtual support and information to entrepreneurs in the region through a virtual platform with a focus on connecting start-ups with assistance and resources to launch their business.

Also launched in Q4 were the two new E-Learning Courses: Business Planning and Branding & Marketing your Small Business to add to the roster of E-Learning for BAC clients.

Number of Businesses Assisted – 42

12	New Venture E-learning course
11	Inquiries for initial assistance from small businesses or potential start ups through our info@peterboroughed.ca
24	Virtual consultations with small business operators
36	Follow up requests from the Business Count Survey
24	Scheduled appointments to assist business operators.

Number of Visitors Served – 299

COVID-19 continues to impact the level of visitation usually experienced at this time of year. In following the provincial mandate and public health officials, the tourism team has focused on hyperlocal campaigns and not encouraging visitation from outside the region during the pandemic. As a result, visitation has been drastically reduced over 2019. The Visitor Centre temporarily re-opened in September 2020, with health and safety provisions in place, but closed again in December as COVID case numbers continued to rise.

Culinary Tourism Strategy:

In Q4, although not open to visitors, PKED, with support from the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO), the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) and the Culinary Tourism Alliance (CTA) worked to create a three year culinary tourism strategy, as part of the national project, **Elevating Canadian Experiences**.

Peterborough & the Kawarthas was selected as one of four destinations across the country to participate in the national pilot. Learnings from this pilot project will inform the creation of a strategic tool to be used by destinations across Canada. The Strategy presents the direction and actions that Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development will take to develop culinary tourism in the destination over the next three years.

Winter/Shoulder Season Development:

As part of the Elevating Canadian Experiences pilot, Peterborough & the Kawarthas Tourism hosted virtual workshops for tourism businesses on November 23rd and 24th, 2020. The topic being Winter and Shoulder Season Tourism Development. The workshop provided participants with an opportunity to learn about the importance of building winter and shoulder season tourism to attract future year-round visitors.

Great Taste of Ontario Road Trip:

PKED participated in the new provincial culinary tourism recovery initiative called 'The Great Taste of Ontario'. The program was designed to inspire Ontarians to explore the food and drink experiences found in our region. A series of local itineraries to inspire hyper-local travel were created and curated on a digital passport. In total, 17 tourism businesses were featured in the digital passport and many others featured in the itineraries. This initiative will continue until the end of 2021.

Safe Travels Stamp and FeastOn Certification:

FeastOn Certification is a certification program that recognizes businesses committed to sourcing and celebrating Ontario grown food and drink. To date, Peterborough & the Kawarthas has 4 FeastOn certified businesses. Work will continue to have more businesses certified in 2021.

Consumer confidence will continue to be a challenge and significant work was undertaken to encourage tourism-based businesses to adopt worldwide industry protocols created through the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) – the SafeTravel Stamp. To date 11 businesses have received the SafeTravels Stamp, a designation to identify for visitors that the business is committed to safe health and safety practices and cleaning protocols.

Number of Leads – 52

In Q4, we had 52 new leads received from regional partners, direct inquiries, as well as the business count survey. From the business count, we asked businesses if they planned on expanding their floor space in the next 12 months to which 44 businesses responded positively and we have been tracking and assisting their expansion efforts. Of those, three businesses have successfully expanded, while 41 are still working on their plans.

The majority of businesses looking for assistance to expand or re-locate to Peterborough consisted of those in the retail industry, followed by manufacturing and agriculture.

Unfortunately, we had 4 requests from regional partners and direct inquiries, typically, large manufacturing companies from Ontario East and Cushman and Wakefield, looking to expand their operations by building new facilities or buying up existing buildings. At the time, Peterborough was unable to support requests for large industrial and serviced lands (ranging from 3-5 acres and 100-350k square foot buildings). These inquiries were generally manufacturing and wholesale trade companies looking for these large parcels.

We saw the successful setup of a ridesharing company, an expansion of a food manufacturing company, as well as a signed agreement with an investment company looking to pursue rural opportunities in the area.

Conferences and Tournaments Attracted - 0

It is expected that sports tourism, meetings and conferences will have a long and slow recovery from the COVID-19. There were a number of cancellations identified in 2020 as well as 2021. However, it was encouraging to see tournament organizers beginning to inquire about potential tournaments to be held in 2022.

Staff have been working closely with all City Hotels as the cancellation of meetings, conferences, and sporting events has had a significant effect on hotel room nights in the City. A marketing campaign to pursue room-night business for City-based hotels had been developed in partnership with other businesses and the DBIA. This campaign a stay-and-shop program which was intended to be launched in November 2020 for the Holiday shopping period. As a result of health unit advice and travel warnings/restrictions it was postponed but will be relaunched when travel is permitted again.

With the state of travel during the pandemic, groups and event coordinators are pausing and working to figure out when and /or how they will replace cancelled or planned events.

Pending the ability to welcome guests/visitors the following sporting events are being planned:

1. The 2021 Provincial Ball Hockey Tournament (Mite/Tyke) - tentatively scheduled for early July 2021
2. The Ontario 55+ Summer Games- tentatively scheduled for Aug 10-12th, 2021

Number of Challenges – 4

Understandably, COVID-19 continues to be the biggest challenge facing local businesses in this region. The reality of the second wave and the impacts felt by businesses as holiday shopping and the provincial lockdown occurred.

Similar to reports in Q3, businesses continue to report that they are having challenges to fill open positions, particularly in the manufacturing and warehousing/distribution/logistics sectors. As of December 31, 2020, there were 362 active job postings in the City and County of Peterborough. Businesses are also continuing to report concern for broadband infrastructure and available land and buildings.

Promoting the Destination in Q4 2020

Clearly, 2020 has presented some unusual circumstances to adapt to. In an ordinary year, intentional marketing and promotion is underway to:

1. Market to key audiences for business growth, investment and visitation.
2. Stakeholder communications and media relations.

In Q4, PKED continued to support the activities and events for PKED., such as promoting Starter Company Plus intakes, the TD Economic Outlook event, culinary workshops for tourism-based businesses, supporting Virtual Learning, and identifying and promoting available funding to businesses, through the PKED website, tourism website and all social media handles.

Given the nature of the pandemic, it was inappropriate to promote the destination to Visitors. Campaigns were refocused on supporting local business and encouraging residents to safely explore and discover this region as a visitor.

This focus will likely remain for the foreseeable future in 2021 as well.

Overview of 2020

While 2020 was certainly one of the most difficult years for economic development, there were a number of activities that were still undertaken to advance the objectives of the PKED Future Ready Economic Development Strategy. Notable activities include:

- Launched the region's first Business Count Survey and learned many things about our business community
- Completed an Aggregation and Distribution Feasibility Study to develop our plan to support Ag producers to expand and grow.
- Applied for and received funding to refresh the Kawartha Choice Farm Fresh website and strengthened our partnerships with City of Kawartha Lakes Economic Development Team
- Had 1,206 interactions with our local companies throughout 2020.
- Have 67 projects in the pipeline to support for expansion and investment opportunities
- Launched multiple surveys to check on our businesses throughout the pandemic

- Developed a new Culinary Tourism Strategy with partners from Culinary Tourism Alliance
- Developed a Visitor Pledge encouraging visitors to be respectful of our communities
- Received funding through the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund to support Tourism marketing initiatives and built an entire year's worth of marketing plans into many multi-faceted campaigns almost overnight.
- Launched a Dream Book embedded with Virtual Reality to showcase this beautiful region
- Supported local business throughout the year with successful marketing campaigns and supported local media as well.
- Worked with the Mayor and Warden on their Economic Recovery Task Force to help businesses overcome the pandemic challenges and identified critical initiatives that are needed to grow our regional economy
- Built a portal on our website to support businesses with up to date information so they could adapt to the everchanging conditions brought about by COVID-19.
- Tracked all of the challenges that our businesses were facing and created a report card to manage these ever-present challenges.
- Created a new position of Virtual Advisor to support entrepreneurs
- Launched the EDO roundtable to ensure that we stay connected with each community in the region and are able to share economic development activities with each other.
- Supported our partners at the Chambers of Commerce, BIAs, Community Future, and Innovation Cluster
- Hosted a Spring Business Summit, TD Economic Outlook event, Customer Service Workshop, Camptech Workshop, Shoulder Season and Culinary Tourism workshops, not to mention Business Fundamentals and New Venture/Growth Wheel sessions. We also supported the Virtual Aerospace Summit at the airport and the Tri-Association Conference with Kawarthas Manufacturing Association
- We launched an online portal for entrepreneurial training

Submitted by,

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