



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the General Committee

From: Terry McCullough, Board Chair
Rhonda Keenan, President & CEO
Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development

Report Date: May 8, 2023

Subject: PKED 2023 Q1 Strategic Plan Activities Report
Report PKED23-003

Purpose

A report to inform Council of Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development's (PKED) 2023 Q1 activities in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding reporting requirements.

Recommendation

That Council approve the recommendation outlined in Report PKED23-003 dated May 8, 2023 of the Board Chair and President & CEO of Peterborough & the Kawarthas Economic Development, as follows:

That Report PKED23-003 and accompanying presentation, providing the Peterborough & Kawarthas Economic Development 2023 Q1 Strategic Plan Activities Report be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implications

There are no budget or financial implications resulting from receiving this report and presentation for information.

Background

PKED's Regional Economic Development Strategy, entitled [Future Ready](#) has four key objectives to deliver regional economic development growth and support the City and County to reach employment growth targets in their respective Official Plans.

Quarterly, PKED provides an activity report and accompanying presentation to both City and County Council, in addition to Q&A from members of Council. These reports are also available on the [InvestPTBO](#) website. (Reports page)

Rhonda Keenan, PKED's President and CEO will attend the May 8, 2023, General Committee meeting to provide a presentation and respond to questions regarding PKED activities.

Submitted by,

Terry McCullough
Board Chair
Peterborough & the Kawarthas
Economic Development

Rhonda Keenan
President & CEO
Peterborough & the Kawarthas
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Attachment No. 1: 2023 Q1 Activities Report

[Presentation Link](#)



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Attachment No. 1**Subject: PKED 2023 Q1 Strategic Plan Activity Report****Outreach and Key Collaboration/Partner Meetings attended**

Throughout the year, PKED staff attend events, host workshops, sponsor partner events and make presentations on economic development matters throughout and beyond the region. Below is a listing of several events and activities undertaken by PKED during Q1, 2023:

- Attended and connected tourism-based businesses with the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism (GMIST) for experiential development training opportunities
- Ontario by Bike – Cycle Tourism Summit
- Economic Developers Council of Ontario - Conference and Showcase
- Peterborough & Kawarthas Chamber of Commerce Power Hour Event 2023
- Cub's Lair Entrepreneurship Event: Judge
- Starter Company Plus Showcase Event
- Women's Business Network; guest speaker on "Customer Personas and Your Small Business"
- EDO Round Table – County of Peterborough Infrastructure Overview
- Junior Achievement Think Tank for Skilled Trades programming
- Marketing meeting with Selwyn Township staff – collaboration & synergy opportunities
- Marketing meeting with Peterborough Airport team – airport profile discussion
- OMAFRA Community Economic Development 101- Training Session
- City event – Mapping the Dollars and Sense of Land Use Patterns Forum – panel participant

Future Ready Objective 1: PROMOTING THE DESTINATION

The Marketing and Communications Team works tirelessly to promote success stories and the positive aspects of living, working, studying, investing, and visiting the destination. In addition to managing PKED's websites and social media platforms, marketing and communication efforts focus on 3 key tactics: marketing campaigns, content development (business profiles, success stories, blogs, itineraries etc.) and media relations (gaining earned media coverage).

Below is an overview of key marketing & communications initiatives undertaken in Q1 2023:

Content Development:

PKED profiles high performing and noteworthy companies in the region. We highlight these employers to the local community so that they are aware of the employment opportunities, but we also use these profiles to tell the story of how businesses are thriving in Peterborough & the Kawarthas region. Additionally, the ongoing development of tourism content to encourage visitation and spending remains a priority. Examples of these are included below:

- [Building and Maintaining a Local Food System Not Only Makes Sense – It's A Central Building Block of Sustainability](#)
- [Wild Rock Outfitters Chooses a Reduced Carbon Footprint over Profits](#)

Marketing Campaigns & Paid Advertising

Promoting Peterborough & the Kawarthas for Investment Attraction and Visitation

In 2022, PKED redeveloped both websites to better reflect the needs of business, investors and visitors, and in January of 2023, further changes were made to align our online marketing efforts through a new social media strategy, which included making some significant changes to our social media platforms including:

- Our existing Instagram and Facebook pages will be dedicated to supporting and celebrating small-to-medium-sized businesses, becoming genuine reflections of the region's collaborative and supportive small business ecosystem, and highlighting PKED's core involvement and leadership alongside our partners in economic development.

www.facebook.com/ptboecdev

www.instagram.com/ptboecdev

- Our LinkedIn and Twitter pages will be streamlined to communicate local business and investment-related news, providing valuable information to the local audience while also highlighting the benefits of the community to external audiences.

www.linkedin.com/company/ptboecdev

www.twitter.com/ptboecdev

- New investment-focused Instagram and Facebook social media accounts have been created to strengthen the awareness and reputation of PKED while establishing the new "InvestPTBO" campaign to effectively position Peterborough & the Kawarthas as a destination of choice for visitors, businesses, entrepreneurs, investors, and students.

www.facebook.com/investptbo

www.instagram.com/investptbo

Redeveloped the Small Business Newsletter to be aligned with the new Small Business social media channels – [read the Spring edition](#)

Distribution of new cycling map completed late last year, entered marketing partnership with Ontario By Bike which includes representation and distribution of cycling maps at Ontario & Quebec trade shows, a [full page ad in the 2023 Ontario By Bike guidebook](#) and promotion of spring cycling in Ontario By Bike's March and April newsletters.

Using the theme of doing your taxes feeling like Groundhog day, PKED worked with Kawartha Now to release an article on Groundhog day promoting upcoming tax webinars : [Free Webinar Will Help Peterborough-area Business Owners Get Ready for Tax Season](#)

Kawartha Now: ['Spark' program ignites aspirations of entrepreneur with a tourism-related business dream](#)

Following the successful [Starter Company Plus Showcase](#), PKED is working with Kawartha Now on a business profile series showcasing the majority of the businesses that graduated from the program over COVID-19, ahead of the April 1st launch of the Spring 2023 intake.

Kawartha Now Starter Company Plus Profile Series

- [Four Peterborough Entrepreneurs Overcome Pandemic Challenges to Launch Businesses with Focus on Helping People](#)
- [Pandemic Inspires Six Peterborough Entrepreneurs to Establish sought-after service-based businesses](#)
- [Six Peterborough entrepreneurs take their creative ventures to the next level](#)
- [A Commitment to Community Brings Success to Seven Peterborough County Entrepreneurs](#)
- [Starter Company Plus Helps Peterborough-Area Entrepreneurs Turn Their Business Ideas Into Reality](#)

Earned Media

To ensure efficient use of PKED's limited marketing budget, one of the key tactics used by the marketing team is working with media outlets, journalists, editors, bloggers, and influencers to gain earned (unpaid) media coverage for the destination featuring local businesses, attractions, and events. Below includes a few examples of earned media coverage gained in Q1 2023:

- Globe & Mail: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/adv/article-how-to-celebrate-maple-syrup-season-off-the-beaten-path-in-ontario/>
- Kawartha Now: [Peterborough's Neighbourhood Vintage is thriving thanks in part to 'Team Ptbo'](#)

Media Coverage

The reputation of a destination is a crucial factor when businesses, investors, residents, students, and visitors are making decisions. As the lead regional economic development agency for Peterborough & the Kawarthas, PKED tracks media coverage of this community, to monitor the tone, topics, trends, and insights that are being reported about this community, and to determine communications strategies to improve the results. It is important for PKED to know how members of the community are speaking about this region as it is a factor when attracting new visitors and industry to the region. It is also equally important for PKED to ensure relevant news is shared with media to build reputation, and to contribute to media stories to provide data, facts, and reflections on various economic development topics. Below is a selection of clips to demonstrate the variety of media coverages tracked and contributed by PKED during Q1 2023:

- Starter Company Plus Program
 - <https://www.ptbocanada.com/journal/starter-company-plus-showcase-returns-to-celebrate-local-small-businesses>
 - <https://kawarthanow.com/2023/02/15/peterborough-area-entrepreneurs-to-be-celebrated-at-starter-company-plus-showcase-on-february-28/>
 - <https://www.ptbotoday.ca/2023/02/13/starter-company-plus-showcase-to-celebrate-small-businesses/>
 - <https://www.ptbocanada.com/journal/stoosnews-business-beat-featuring-champagne-photography-pked-hot-chocolate-fest-indian-river-acres-and-launch-kawartha-innovation>
 - <https://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/business/2023/03/01/new-entrepreneurs-making-an-impact-in-peterborough.html>

- <https://www.ptbotoday.ca/2023/03/02/63278/>
- Summer Company Program
 - <https://www.ptbocanada.com/journal/local-youth-encouraged-to-consider-starting-a-small-business-this-summer>
 - <https://www.ptbotoday.ca/2023/03/10/63588/>
 - <https://www.ptbocanada.com/journal/stoosnews-business-beat-featuring-gaias-greens-beans-books-seniors-showcase-and-pked>
- Spark Program
 - <https://www.ptbocanada.com/journal/second-intake-of-spark-program-now-open-to-support-tourism-innovation-in-peterborough-and-the-kawarthas>
- DBIA
 - <https://kawarthanow.com/2023/02/13/inaugural-hot-chocolate-fest-coming-to-downtown-peterborough-in-february/>
 - <https://www.ptbotoday.ca/2023/02/13/community-spotlight-first-ever-ptbo-hot-chocolate-fest-launches/>
- International Women's Day: <https://www.ptbotoday.ca/2023/03/08/63496/>

OBJECTIVE 2: Leveraging the Mix of Urban and Rural Assets and Businesses (GROW and ATTRACT)

The Business Development and Tourism Teams are responsible for working directly with businesses to identify opportunities for growth and expansion, but also areas of vulnerability to ensure every effort is made to retain existing businesses. PKED is a member of the Ontario East Economic Development Commission and works collaboratively to generate leads for this region. PKED also works collaboratively with Regional Tourism Organization 8 (RTO8).

Attraction and Expansion

An overview of the types of inquiries received can be found below:

- 24 inquires & leads requesting business support: food processing, aerospace, tourism accommodation, aquaculture, fish farm, manufacturing, health and wellness, events & conferences, consulting and retail)
- 62 tourism-based businesses requiring support
- 4 leads are still active inquiries with varying degrees of interest in the region
- 3 of the lead inquiries were lost as a suitable site was not available to offer
- 2 events were also lost because of organizers not being able to meet the City's updated insurance requirements.

Business Development Inquiries:

- Available funding / grants for existing businesses (for construction, expansions, and just in general)
- Available industrial buildings that vary in size between 8,000sqft to 40,000sqft (food processing, electric vehicle
- Employers that are currently hiring inquiring about where they can find workers
- Data and reports regarding part time & full-time employment in the area
- Inquires asking for how we can assist them in making connections to help them with their business (examples: if we have any suggestions on who they can speak to at the city

regarding their permit on construction, where they can find potential employees and what resources are available).

- Inquiries asking for assistance to mitigate the municipal risk and insurance requirements for hosting events.

Tourism Business Inquiries:

- Website business listing updates/changes/
- Programming (ex. Great Taste of Ontario, Ptbo Picnic, Safe Travels Stamp etc.)
- Experiential development coaching (ex. adding a culinary offering to current tourism product)
- Permits/permissions for diversified use (ex. bunkie)
 - Liaise with townships
 - Research/share best practices, etc.
- Staffing Issues including hiring, funding, transportation, illness, flexible schedules
 - Sandbox Session - Diversity & Inclusion workshop talked about marketing to the 2SLGBTQ+ community directly and clearly stating DEI priorities including safety directly in job postings
 - Marketing corporate culture to stand out while hiring in the hospitality industry
 - what makes them unique and what type of environment can applicants expect?
- Too many ideas, not sure how to streamline where to put effort
 - Programming such as Spark, Start Company Plus, Webinars & Training opportunities, etc.

Supporting Local Growth and Expansion

PKED delivered key programs in Q1 to help local businesses grow and expand, notable programs include:

Spark Program - Tourism Innovation and Product Development:

PKED is running the Spark program through the Tourism Innovation Lab for the second intake closing in early April. Recognizing that tourism operators are competing globally for visitors' attention and to ensure that this region has many new authentic and exciting experiences to attract visitors, this program is offered to early-stage businesses based on a competitive region wide application and 'pitch' process. Three applicants will be awarded an intensive training and mentorship program to develop their tourism ideas and provided them with a pilot program grant to launch their experience.

Note: work has continued through the first quarter on graduates of the first round of Spark, with winners poised to offer experiences in the spring and summer, and one winner being featured provincially by Destination Ontario for their unique product.

Sustainability & the Circular Economy: PKED continues to support Green Economy Peterborough, and its efforts to build the local network of businesses focussed on green and sustainable business practices. In addition, PKED is participating in the Circular Cities and Regions Initiatives to learn best practices to bring greater circularity and sustainability to the regional economy.

Meetings, Conferences and Sporting Events

Attracting meetings, conferences and sporting events is an important activity to invite new visitors to the region and generate significant economic impact. Hosting sporting events and conferences of all sizes supports tourism-dependent businesses outside of the typical tourism season and provides the destination with an opportunity to highlight all we have to offer. PKT works hard to attract multiple events throughout the year.

Sports Tourism: Our active campaign to attract and support sport tourism/events over the last five years has been highly successful, boasting provincial, national and international competitions. It was, however, seriously set back by the pandemic as most events were cancelled or operated in a 'bubble'. While promoting the community has been ongoing, in February 2023 we have taken the active step of reestablishing the Peterborough Sport Tourism Committee (that led to successful bids such as the Ontario 55+ Games) with participation from PKED/PKT, The City of Peterborough, Trent University and Fleming College and support from the school boards and outreach to all local leagues. This is an important step in collaboratively presenting the community as a desirable location for sports events.

Attracting & Supporting Meetings, Conferences & Sports Events:

PKED also supports local associations and event organizations that hosted a number of sport events this quarter including:

- The PSB Wilson Squash Classic – which saw over 125 participants, 55 players, and an estimated 80 hotel room nights (and several comments that properties were full)
- The PWHPA Womens Hockey Dream Gap Tour
- The OUA Men's Curling Championships (Hosted by Trent University at the Peterborough Curling Club)
- The return of the Cancast Fishing and Tackle Show - first secured in 2019 – Back post-covid, assisted in promoting and connecting the event with stakeholders

PKED also supported the recruitment and/or operations of the 2023 Annual Conference & AGM of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association, the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus, and the OHL Annual General Meetings (all to occur Q2 2023)

Note: there were two events that were actively recruited, secured and supported that have been lost to Peterborough due to not being able to meet the City's risk management and insurance requirements.

- The Royal Philatelic Society of Canada National Convention
- Peterborough Fall Fling Half Marathon + (Endurance Event Productions)

It should be noted that the increased insurance requirements will continue to be a threat for Peterborough to host events such as sporting races as well as grassroots community events as they cannot meet the City's insurance requirements. It is expected that many events will not be able to meet these increased insurance provisions and the number of events offered in the community are anticipated to drop as a result.

Visitor Services

Not only does PKED work with tourism businesses, but there is a team dedicated to marketing the destination for visitation, as well as a team dedicated to delivering visitor services and ensuring that the visitor experience meets and exceeds expectations while in the destination.

Peterborough & the Kawarthas Tourism works with visitors through in-person and digital visitor services. The downtown Visitor Centre in the Venture North building is our primary method for interacting with visitors. Open year-round, a wide selection of free information including travel guides, brochures, postcards, road maps and trail guides are provided. During prime tourist season, Summer Travel Counsellors will have a presence in communities, and at events & locks along the Trent-Severn Waterway with a wagon of information and PKT swag to interact with those our experiencing the destination firsthand. Along the way, they will stop in tourism related businesses to see any new product or experiences available, to have a first-hand experience at the business, and to share PKED's services and publications.

The Visitor Services team also sets up semi-permanent locations (outside of the Peterborough Downtown Visitor Centre at Venture North) to provide visitor services in during peak tourism season with the goal of reaching visitors while they are out in the destination to increase opportunity for further spend. During the 2022 summer season, travel counsellors were located at the Peterborough Lift Lock with a pop-up tent to serve visitors travelling the Trent Severn Waterway, and those coming to see one of the top attractions. In 2023 more locations will be sourced to expand this service. Mobile booths will also be considered at signature events & attractions throughout the City & County of Peterborough to be easily.

The Visitor Centre served the following number of **in-person only** customers:

- Jan: 30
- Feb: 89
- Mar: 95

The Visitor Centre served the following number of inquiries across all channels:

- Jan: 81
- Feb: 145
- Mar: 163

Top requested visitor information:

- Attractions
- Festivals & Events
- Arts, Culture & Heritage
- Food & Drink
- Sports & Recreation
- Shopping
- Farmers' Market
- Parks & Trails

OBJECTIVE 3: Building a job-ready, highly skilled, and innovative workforce for the future.

Access to a skilled and available workforce has been a well-documented challenge, where employers cannot find workers and job seekers cannot find meaningful employment. This workforce divide is fundamentally not sustainable for businesses as well as the community at large. PKED is either participating, leading or supporting a number of workforce development initiatives underway.

Sustainability & the Circular Economy: PKED continues to support Green Economy Peterborough, and its efforts to build the local network of businesses focussed on green and sustainable business practices. In addition, PKED is participating in the Circular Cities and Regions Initiatives to learn best practices to bring greater circularity and sustainability to the regional economy.

Pathways to Prosperity (P2P)

In previous Business Count Surveys, access to workforce has been identified as a major barrier for businesses. In response, PKED created a workforce development program in partnership with Muskoka Kawartha Employment Services (MKES), Fleming College, Workforce Development Board and City of Kawartha Lakes Economic Development to deliver a Skills Development Funded Project: **Pathways to Prosperity (P2P)**.

The P2P program offers training through Fleming College, job placements, upskilling for workers and leadership training for employers. The program also highlights the various pathways that job seekers can take to move from entry level positions to more advanced careers with greater earning potential in the region.

The Pathways to Prosperity project concluded on March 31, 2023 and reported:

- 52 businesses registered (Goal 50)
- 46 of those businesses participated in incumbent training
- 308 participants received incumbent training (Goal 50)
- 70 job seekers were trained to re-enter the job market (Goal 180).

A key deliverable for the P2P project was the creation of career ladders, which included the creative development and marketing of a series of Infographics and Career Ladder Rack Cards for distribution to program partners in support of [Workforce Development Board's Career Ladder development project](#) – [view the graphics](#)

Completed Pathways to Prosperity [Employer Profile Series](#) which features local employers in manufacturing, food service, construction, and agriculture

PKED has submitted a second application for Round 3 funding to continue this work with minor modifications based on participant and business input, but as of the report submission date has not been advised by the province if it will be funded.

Trent Community Concierge Program

It has been a long-established goal to retain students in the community after they graduate. To that end, PKED partnered with City of Kawartha Lakes economic development and Trent University to create a Community Concierge program that involves preparing graduating students for the workforce and connecting them with experiential learning opportunities in the community with a final goal of increasing student retention in the community. To date 33 businesses in Peterborough have signed on to create over 3000 experiential learning opportunities over the next several years.

Despite these efforts workforce shortages continue to be a challenge. The Workforce Development Board presents monthly [Job Demand](#) reports for the region.

March 2023 Job Report

The Workforce Development Board provides monthly statistics for Labourforce information.

2,467 Job Postings in the County of Peterborough

2,045 Job Postings in the City of Peterborough

The workforce development board also provides occupation demand projections for the Peterborough area between 2023 and 2028 with the Top 10 occupations:

- Plastics Processing machine operators
- Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates
- Other customer and information services representatives
- Accounting and related clerks
- Nursing coordinators and supervisors
- Public works maintenance equipment operators and related workers
- Sales and account representatives – wholesale trade
- College and other vocational instructors
- Social and community service workers
- Food and beverage servers

OBJECTIVE 4: Support all phases of entrepreneurship

The Business Advisory Centre is one of 54 advisory centres across the province dedicated to supported start-ups and entrepreneurs. Through dedicated programming, workshops and consultations, the BAC is a highly active centre for PKED.

Inquiries received: **BAC received 88 inquiries in Q1 via email, phone and walk-in**

Consultations: **BAC performed 46 consultations in Q1**

Businesses started with support from the BAC: **10 in Q1**

Workshops Hosted: **BAC hosted 13 workshops in total for Q1**

BAC public presentations

- In addition to our Business Fundamentals delivered on a rotating basis (New Venture Workshop, Business Planning, Lean Canvas and Market Research), the BAC delivered standalone workshops in Q1 to respond to small business demands:

- **“Grow your Small Business on Instagram”** workshop delivered by Camp Tech had 112 registrants with 53 attendees.
 - **Tax workshop** series for Sole Proprietorships and Incorporated entities which ran over February and March. With 3 virtual workshops to attend (2 for sole-proprietors and 1 for incorporated entities), these workshops were delivered via Canada Revenue Liaison Officers.
 - **Starter Company Plus Showcase Event** see objective 1: Promoting the Destination
- Connected with Employment Planning and Counselling (EPC) to provide workshops to job counsellors on self-employment as a career path for their clients
 - Guest speaker to the January 2023 Women’s Business Network evening networking event on “Customer Personas as a Small Business”
 - Trent University guest speaker to 3rd and 4th year business students on how to properly deliver a business pitch. Provided the students real world critiques and experiences in their culminating presentations.

BAC program Highlights

- Summer Company program: Media Advisory launched on March 7th for the 2023 season. Summer Company is the province of Ontario’s flagship youth entrepreneurship program for youths aged 15-29 looking to explore entrepreneurship. This program has funding for 7 youth entrepreneurs. Application will close May 15th, 2023
- Program details: [Summer Company](#)
- The Starter Company Plus program opened for applications on April 1st, 2023. This is the Business Advisory Centre’s entrepreneurship training program. Participants who are accepted receive business training, mentorship, guidance and the opportunity to pitch and receive a \$5000 micro-grant. The BAC has proudly delivered this program since 2017.
- Program details: [Starter Company Plus](#)

Top requested info by local businesses

Businesses have reached out to the PKED team for the following support requests:

- Financing information: loans, grants, and funding for their small business startup or expansion; significant requests as COVID-19 relief programs come to a close in 2023.
- Support on utilizing or enhancing their social media presence
- Information on how to properly file their taxes as a small business; support regarding financial management
- Information on how to hire employees and retain staff

Barriers to Business

Businesses have reported the following as barriers to business growth in the region. PKED works with industry partners, agencies as well as municipal staff to mitigate many of these barriers, however, a collaborative approach will be required to address these high-level challenges.

- Funding/Grants for existing businesses for construction, expansion and general funding needs
- Accessing a suitable supply of available lands and buildings (8,000 to 40,000 sf)
- Insurance & Risk Mitigation

- Recruitment and hiring support
- Support and connections with municipal departments
- Improving social media presence and/or marketing consultation
- Tax filing and financial management
- Streamlining business ideas and managing information overload

Opportunities

- Electric Vehicle, Autonomous, connected Vehicle
- Food processing
- Circular economy businesses
- Agri-tourism / culinary tourism

Relationship to the Five-Year Strategic Plan – Future Ready

VISION – To be the most sustainable and innovative community and economy in Ontario.

Objective 1: Promote Peterborough & the Kawarthas as a Destination of choice for visitors, business, entrepreneurs, investors, and students.

Objective 2: Leverage the Region's mix of rural and urban assets and business.

Objective 3: Build a Job-Ready, highly skilled, and innovative workforce of the future.

Objective 4: Support all phases of entrepreneurship, while also supporting existing business.

Relationship to the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) Agreement with the City and County of Peterborough

This report highlights the key activities undertaken for each of the core economic development activities identified in the Memorandum of Understanding with the City and County of Peterborough:

- Promote
- Start
- Grow
- Attract



Rhonda Keenan, Ec.D., CEcD.
President & CEO