



**Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, June 11, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.**

**Meeting to be held in Virtual Electronic Format and
live streamed on the County of Frontenac's Youtube
Channel**

**<https://youtu.be/K7eutMBSro4>
2069 Battersea Road, Glenburnie, ON**

AGENDA

Page

1. Call to Order

2. Adoption of the Agenda

- a) **That** the agenda for the June 11, 2020 meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee be adopted.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

4. Adoption of Minutes

- a) Minutes of Meeting held February 13, 2020

That the minutes of the Community Development Advisory Committee meeting held February 13, 2020 be adopted.

5. Deputations and/or Presentations

6. Reports to the Community Development Advisory

- a) **2020-055
Community Development Advisory Committee
Responding to the economic impact of COVID-19 in Frontenac
County**

This report is for information only. It is intended to spark discussion with respect to potential tactics and programs to support economic recovery and ongoing economic development in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- b) **2020-056
Community Development Advisory Committee
Online Multi-Vendor Marketplace**

This report is for information only. It is intended to update the committee on the progress made on the online multi-vendor marketplace initiative.

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- 29 - 32** c) **2020-057**
Community Development Advisory Committee
Open Farms 2020, Virtual Format
This report is for information only.
- 33 - 38** d) **2020-058**
Community Development Advisory Committee
VisitFrontenac.ca Website Development
This report is for information only. It is intended to solicit comments from the Committee on the transition from the economic development web portal infrontenac.ca to a new regional tourism website visitfrontenac.ca.
- 39 - 43** e) **2020-059**
Community Development Advisory Committee
Frontenac K&P Trail Marketing Plan
This report is for information only. It is intended to solicit advice from the Committee on the intended marketing plan for the Frontenac K&P Trail.
- 44 - 46** f) **2020-060**
Community Development Advisory Committee
One-on-One Digital Support Sessions
This report is for information only.

7. Communications

8. Other Business

9. Next Meeting

- a) The next regular meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, August 13, 2020

10. Adjournment



FRONTENAC

Minutes of the Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting February 13, 2020

A meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee was held in the Bud Clayton Memorial Room, County Administrative Office, 2069 Battersea Road, Glenburnie on Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 10:00 AM

Present:

Betty Hunter, Chair
Barrie Gilbert
Wilma Kenny, Vice Chair
Councillor Alan Revill, Council Liaison
Lisa Henderson
Greg Rodgers

Regrets:

Mary Kloosterman
Councillor Denis Doyle

Staff Present:

Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development
Alison Vandervelde, Community Development Officer
Joe Gallivan, Director of Planning and Economic Development

1. Call to Order

Mr. Allen called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

3. Election of Officers

The Election of Officers was conducted by Mr. Allen.

Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2020 -10:00 AM

a) Election of Chair

Moved By: Ms. Kenny
Seconded By: Mr. Gilbert

That Betty Hunter be elected Chair of the Community Development Advisory Committee for 2020.

Carried

Moved By: Mr. Gilbert
Seconded By: Ms. Henderson

That nominations for the Chair be closed.

Carried

Ms. Hunter accepted the nomination of Chair.

b) Election of Vice Chair

Moved By: Mr. Gilbert
Seconded By: Ms. Henderson

That Wilma Kenney be elected Vice Chair of the Community Development Advisory Committee for 2020.

Carried

Moved By: Mr. Rodgers
Seconded By: Mr. Gilbert

That nominations for the Vice Chair be closed

Carried

Ms. Kenny accepted the nomination of Vice-Chair.

Ms. Hunter assumed the Chair.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Moved By: Ms. Henderson
Seconded By: Mr. Gilbert

That the agenda for the February 13, 2020 meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee be adopted.

Carried

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

There were none.

4. Adoption of Minutes

a) Minutes of Meeting held November 14, 2019

Moved By: Mr. Gilbert
Seconded By: Mr. Rodgers

That the minutes of the Community Development Advisory Committee meeting held November 14, 2019 be adopted as amended.

Carried as Amended

On page 2 of 5 the reference to “Mr. Vanderburgt” be amended to “Ms. Vanderburgt”.

5. Deputations and/or Presentations

Ms. Debbie Fitzerman, DFC BBQ Sauce briefed the Community Development Advisory Committee regarding her experience with the Royal Winter Fair

Ms. Fitzerman described her experience to the committee as a great opportunity for DFC Condiments. DFC attended the show for the full 10 days, and observed that Frontenac staff communicated well with vendors who arrived well prepared for the show. Networking with other vendors in the booth and with other vendors across the Spotlight on Local feature was valuable. DFC observed that the final weekend of the show was the most successful. Ms. Fitzerman reported that for their business model, which is centered on wholesaling, a different show – like SIAL Canada – is likely to be a better fit. In speaking with another vendor at The Royal, Ms. Fitzerman discovered that exhibition space can cost as much as \$3,500. Attending The Royal as part of Frontenac’s Spotlight on Local, DFC was able to get the experience at no cost. The collaborative nature of the booth caused a bit of confusion in terms of branding. There was not a clear booth brand and vendors in the booth rotated in/out and moved around within the booth frequently.

Councillor Alan Revill entered the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

6. Reports to the Community Development Advisory

a) **2020-010
Community Development Advisory Committee
Regional Gateway Signs – Final Report**

Mr. Allen gave an overview of the regional signage report. Mr. Gilbert commented that the signage is very attractive and particularly well-handled on Wolfe Island. Committee members agreed that the regional signs look good.

b) **2020-011
Community Development Advisory Committee
Tourism Sentiment Index**

Mr. Allen gave an overview of the report.

Mr. Rodgers has been informally researching customer reviews of Sharbot Lake businesses through Google Maps and has found that most businesses are rated at 4.2 out of 5 but the village itself is rated at 3.2. This indicates that there are great businesses in the village and there is potential for a collaborative strategy to positively impact the overall visitor experience in Sharbot Lake.

Mr. Allen mentioned that he is looking into undertaking a Destination Development Strategy, with support from the Regional Tourism Organizations, which could include the kind of work Mr. Rodgers is referring to.

Mr. Gilbert suggested that the volume of conversations about nature photography could be low in part because people are not familiar with the best locations to view and photograph wildlife in the region. Reaching out to special interest groups, like the Kingston Field Naturalists and encouraging them to talk via more liberally on social media about their experiences could boost the visibility of nature photography and wildlife viewing as an attractive visitor experience in Frontenac.

Mr. Rodgers mentioned he sees great potential for targeting and attracting a wide variety of special interest groups to Frontenac for all kinds of experiences.

Ms. Kenney cautioned that increased marketing can sometimes attract more visitors than the event or attraction is prepared to handle. It is important that the impact of increased visitation is weighed against available resources and infrastructure.

Ms. Henderson suggested using photography contests and specific hashtags could be used to encourage people toward certain activities.

Ms. Hunter observed that online engagement and awareness of the dark sky viewing area is growing all the time. She recently posted about a couple of satellites that nearly colliding and the post got 14,000 views.

c) **2020-012**
Community Development Advisory Committee
The Royal Winter Fair

Moved By: Councillor Revill
Seconded By: Ms. Henderson

Be It Resolved That the County of Frontenac participate in the Royal Winter Fair's 2020 Spotlight on Local, pending the availability of free exhibition space and the interest of Frontenac Ambassadors

Carried

Ms. Vandervelde gave an overview of the report. Anne Prichard spoke to her involvement as a volunteer at the event. She indicated that some vendors may not return to The Royal again as long term sales relationships were not as prolific as anticipated. Councillor Revill asked about staff time required. Mr. Allen indicated that in 2019, there were about 18 days of staff time invested in the event.

7. Communications



8. Other Business



9. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, April 9, 2019 at the County Administrative Offices.

10. Adjournment

Moved By: Mr. Gilbert
Seconded By: Councillor Revill

That the meeting hereby adjourn at 11:18 a.m.

Carried



Report 2020-055

Committee Information Report

To: Chair and Members of the Community Development Advisory Committee

From: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development

Prepared by: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development

Date of meeting: June 11, 2020

Re: **Community Development Advisory Committee – Responding to the economic impact of COVID-19 in Frontenac County**

Recommendation

This report is for information only. It is intended to spark discussion with respect to potential tactics and programs to support economic recovery and ongoing economic development in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion

On March 17, 2020 the Province of Ontario declared a state of emergency with respect to the COVID-19 Pandemic and on March 26, 2020 the County of Frontenac declared a state of emergency within the County of Frontenac in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Both states of emergency are still in place as of the writing of this report.

The Economic Development Team immediately responded to the pandemic and related temporary business closures through regular engagement – weekly communications, weekly business videoconferences, an online information hub and multiple one-on-one engagements. The initial response for local businesses was communicated to County Council at its Special Meeting held April 8, 2020 through Report 2020-041 (Appendix A).

In addition, as the economic shutdown connected to the pandemic continued, the Economic Development Team revised its 2020 Business plan to respond to the immediate and long term needs of the local business community. These changes were outlined in report 2020-050 (Appendix B) and adopted by County Council at its regular meeting on May 20, 2020.

The Economic Development Team is seeking input from the Community Development Advisory Committee on potential tactics and additional support programs for economic recovery in addition to those outlined in report 2020-050.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 1.2: Refine and invest in efforts to accelerate economic development — to grow businesses, attract more visits and expand the tax base.

Local businesses are struggling to recover from the economic shutdown connected to the COVID-19 pandemic, and are looking for support as they adapt to an ongoing state of pandemic readiness. In order to grow businesses, they must feel supported and stabilized during the uncertainty that has emerged from this pandemic situation.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Businesses operating in Frontenac County.



Report 2020-041

Council Information Report

To: Warden and Council
From: Kelly Pender, Chief Administrative Officer
Prepared by: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development
Date of meeting: April 8, 2020
Re: **Planning and Economic Development – Initial COVID-19 Response for Businesses in Frontenac County**

Recommendation

This report is for information only.

Background

Since the COVID-19 Pandemic has reached Canada, the response by public health officials and every level of government has been dramatic, with policy announcements and regulations in Ontario impacting first schools, but then workers, residents, businesses, and travellers shortly afterwards. As the landscape continues to shift on almost a daily basis, businesses struggle to respond to evolving conditions, with many seeing an immediate and direct impact on their bottom line.

Discussion

However swiftly the new policies have been implemented, there is now a risk of longer periods of isolation and temporary business closures as public health officials work to slow the rapid spread of the virus. On March 31, 2020, the provincial government extended closures of schools until May 4, 2020 indicating that the current state of emergency will continue in some form until then. This leaves many businesses uncertain of when they may expect to generate revenues again, and in the case of many seasonal and tourism businesses, if they will be able to open at all in 2020.

Essential businesses and those that have adapted to the COVID-19 requirements are currently permitted to continue operations under the State of Emergency. They have adapted their business model in order to both serve the community and continue to

generate revenue. These businesses have seen support from the local community, and have implemented measures to protect workers from potential infection.

During the past few weeks, the Frontenac County Economic Development team has been monitoring the local, provincial and national response to COVID-19 and has committed to the following:

- Maintaining a comprehensive web page with up-to-date resources for businesses
- Sharing relevant information to local business via weekly email newsletters
- Hearing regularly from businesses by hosting video conference “check-ins”
- Understanding the real-time impacts on businesses through a monthly survey
- Launching a local pride social media campaign
- Meeting with Tourism and Economic Development officials to learn best practices as they are developed and to coordinate response strategies
- Developing response and recovery strategies (to be detailed in subsequent reports)

Information Hub

Staff have been collecting and filtering information from partners and other levels of government, and keeping it on a single comprehensive webpage. The information is geared towards business, but does include public health information and initiatives being launched by local partners.

Get the most up to date information at www.infrontenac.ca/covid-19

Weekly Update Newsletter

Using the communications channels associated with the Frontenac Ambassador Program, the Economic Development Team first started to inform local businesses of program cancellations due to COVID-19 on March 13 and began to providing weekly updates with relevant news and resources. In order to receive these newsletters, businesses must be registered for the Frontenac Ambassador program. Details on the program and registration can be found at infrontenac.ca/ambassadors.

Weekly Business Check-In

Staff have been hosting weekly group video conference meetings with businesses. The calls are an opportunity for business owners to simply connect, to share their stories, successes and challenges. Feedback has been very positive. These meetings are extremely valuable and provide insight into how Frontenac County can best respond to the local situation. Businesses from every Township across Frontenac County have participated in the meetings. They have also been attended by Anne Prichard (Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation), Ian Murdoch (Kingston Economic Development) and Kimberly Sutherland Mills (Kingston Frontenac Public Library) who have offered support and advice to the participating business owners.

Businesses can register for upcoming meetings at:

infrontenac.ca/business-check-in

Frontenac Business Impact Survey

On March 31, 2020 staff launched the first monthly COVID-19 Business Impact Survey. This series of surveys will deploy at the start of each month for a week in order to capture a sense of how businesses have been impacted, how the local business landscape is shifting and to determine how the County can best support businesses going forward.

The current survey is open from March 31 - April 6, 2020:

infrontenac.ca/covid-19-BusinessImpactSurvey

Local Pride Campaign

For residents and businesses alike, now is a time for coming together to support one another. Local residents and businesses have already taken initiative to serve local needs and strengthen the bonds within our Frontenac communities. Staff are working to quickly develop a campaign to further the reach of these initiatives and help strengthen the message that “our community is in this together, and together we will get through it.”

Partner Communication

County Economic Development staff have been meeting on a regular basis with partners in economic development and tourism to determine strategies for short-term response and long term recovery. This includes almost daily calls with the Frontenac CFDC and weekly meetings with Eastern Ontario tourism colleagues.

Frontenac Family Campaign

Staff are working with Jon Allison of Back Country Branding to develop a campaign to foster support for businesses and a spirit of community pride in Frontenac. The campaign will centre around the concept that we – everyone who lives and works here – is part of the Frontenac family. “In times of crisis, families need to stick together. And together, we will weather the storm.” The campaign will include specific suggestions for residents to support businesses and will celebrate the extraordinary ways our community is coming together.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications with this report.

Strategic Priority Implications

Priority 2.1: To meet the needs of future capital projects, explore new sources of funding support (current and future programs), cost-sharing options and other potential economies.

Priority 3.1: Work with the townships, other municipalities and levels of government on broad infrastructure issues — ranging from environmental concerns to regional transportation strategies for residential, social and economic purposes, and access to funding.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Businesses in Frontenac County

Joe Gallivan, Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (RTO11)

Southeastern Ontario (RTO9)

Anne Prichard, Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation



Report 2020-050

Council Recommend Report

To: Warden and Council
From: Kelly Pender, Chief Administrative Officer
Prepared by: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development
Date of meeting: May 20, 2020
Re: **Planning and Economic Development – Changes to 2020-2024 Business Plan to address changes to the local economy related to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Recommendation

That County Council approve changes to the Planning and Economic Development 2020-2024 business plan in response to COVID-19 as outlined in this report.

Background

Since the COVID-19 Pandemic has reached Canada, the response by public health officials and every level of government has been dramatic, with policy announcements and regulations in Ontario impacting first schools, then workers, residents, businesses, and travellers shortly afterwards. As the landscape continues to shift on almost a daily basis, businesses struggle to respond to evolving conditions, with many seeing an immediate and direct impact on their bottom line.

Discussion

Since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic, local businesses have been forced to adapt to strict social distancing protocols or close. Many small businesses have found ways to adapt to the situation by offering delivery, online options or curbside pickup. Travel for recreational purposes such as camping or cottage rentals has been discouraged, and as the busy summer tourist season approaches, many seasonal businesses face uncertainty with respect to whether they will be permitted to open, and if so, if they will have customers willing to travel to their location. At the time of writing, the Canada/US border remains closed to non-essential travel and many of our seasonal businesses have a significant percentage of their visitor traffic arrive annually from south of the border. Through the weekly discussions with local businesses, one-on-one

communications and survey results the Economic Development Team has discovered that the business community is divided about welcoming guests from outside the KFL&A region. It is also becoming apparent that large gatherings and events will continue to be discouraged for the remainder of 2020, and with events being an important driver of visitation in our region, this will negatively impact economic activity in Frontenac further.

Research

The impact of COVID-19 and the public health measures taken to slow the spread of the virus on the Canadian economy is devastating.

The Conference Board of Canada reports that Canada experienced the loss of 2,000,000 jobs in April and that Ontario is expected to lose 572,000 jobs between April and June of 2020. The Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses conducted an online survey on April 23:

- 32% of Canadian businesses who have closed are unsure if they will be able to open up again
- Only 20% are fully open, 30% do not have cash flow to pay April bills and 39% are worried about permanent closure.
- The average loss to small businesses due to COVID-19 is \$214,915 so far.

With regard to Tourism, Ipsos conducted reports that indicate:

- 3 in 4 Canadians are not comfortable taking a vacation this year
- 8 in 10 Canadians are avoiding public places like malls, restaurants and coffee shops
- 42% of Ontarians are likely to avoid travel this year, even within their own province.
- 71% of Ontarians are not supportive of bringing international tourists to our province.

Local Business Impact Surveys: Top Level Results

Once it was clear that the province-wide state of emergency was going to be around for weeks, if not months, the Economic Development Team distributed a survey to local businesses to take the temperature of the local economy. Below is a brief summary of some of the results.

Survey 1: March 31 to April 6, 2020 (111 responses)

- **Impact of COVID-19 on operations:**
53% of respondents indicated the impact is 10 out 10, meaning greatly impacted.
73% indicated an impact of 7 or higher (including 10)
- **Business closures:**
0% have closed permanently
42% have closed temporarily
25% have found alternative ways to serve their customers
- **Risk of permanent closure:**
52% of respondents do not expect to close permanently as a result of COVID-19.
25% are uncertain about the future of their business at this point.
- **Impact on sales:**
62% of respondents indicated that they have decreased revenue
39% have had bookings or orders cancelled
22% have had challenges receiving supplies to do business with
- **Of businesses that completed cash flow projections:**
15% were in need of immediate financial support and
36% reported that they will have difficulty within a few months
- **Support Programs:** At the time of this survey, only a few support programs were available, but local businesses planned to make use of them immediately
44% - Canada Emergency Response Benefit
23% - Wage Subsidy Programs (Details not yet released)
16% - Business Credit Availability Programs (Details not yet released)

In early May, the Economic Development Team updated and redistributed the survey to capture any economic shifts that may have occurred in the previous four weeks.

Survey 2: May 1 to May 8, 2020 (90 responses, 55% of respondents completed Survey #1)

- **Impact of COVID-19 on operations:**
+ 38% of respondents indicated the impact is 10 out 10, meaning greatly impacted.
- 76% indicated an impact of 7 or higher (including 10)
- **Business closures:**
0% have closed permanently
- 47% have closed temporarily
+ 32% have found alternative ways to serve their customers
- **Risk of permanent closure:**
+ 63% of respondents do not expect to close permanently due to COVID-19.
+ 16% are uncertain about the future of their business at this point.

- **Impact on sales:**
 - 73% of respondents indicated that they have decreased revenue
 - 45% have had bookings or orders cancelled
 - 33% have had challenges receiving supplies
- **April 2019 Sales Comparison with April 2020**
 - 45% of respondents indicated they had decreased revenue of 50% or more
 - + 10% of respondents indicated they had **increased** revenue of 25% or more
- **Of businesses that completed cash flow projections:**
 - 5% were in need of immediate financial support and
 - 20% reported that they will have difficulty within a few months
- **Support Programs:** At the time of this survey, only a few support programs were available, but local businesses planned to make use of them immediately
 - 37% - Canada Emergency Response Benefit
 - 9% - Wage Subsidy Programs
 - 2% - Commercial Rent Assistance Program
 - 28% - Business Credit Availability Programs
- **Business Sentiment:**
 - + 17% feel more positive about the future of their business than one month ago
 - 55% feel about the same about the future of their business as one month ago
 - 28% feel less positive about the future of their business than one month ago

While the results of survey #2 are positive with respect to permanent business closures, the differences between respondents of the first and second surveys are significant enough that the data from both surveys should be considered when establishing a local context.

The economic impact with respect to sales is significant and trending in a negative direction. This trend can be expected only to worsen as many businesses in Frontenac are seasonal and the bulk of revenues take place in the second half of the calendar year. This will affect the ability for businesses to sustain employment and/or make future investments to grow and remain competitive. Those businesses who have been able to adapt to COVID-19 and the related economic shutdown have reported not only strong revenues, but additional expenses, thus narrowing profit margins considerably.

When asked what would support operations both now and in the next 6-12 months, common responses included:

- Extension of the CEWS program (which was announced by Prime Minister Trudeau on May 8, 2020) and continued availability of CERB until the economy stabilizes
- Property Tax relief
- Regional Marketing and Tourism Promotion

- Financial aid similar to the small EODP grants previously available through the Frontenac CFDC which could be used to support retooling and adaptation to a “socially distant” business model
- Support both financially and logistically with procuring PPE and cleaning/sanitizing supplies
- Several comments were made with respect to seasonal businesses being able to open and salvage some of their season. These businesses are seeking more direction and clarity from the province and public health with respect to their operations.

Existing Federal and Provincial Support

1. [Canada Emergency Response Benefit \(CERB\)](#): Temporary income support for individuals who stopped work due to COVID-19.
2. **Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA)**: The CEBA is a federally funded revolving line of credit being made available to each eligible business which applies online through their primary financial institutions. CEBA funds will be available for businesses which paid an annual payroll of \$20,000 to \$1,500,000 in 2019. The intent of the funds is to cover non-deferrable costs such as payroll, rent, insurance, and utilities.
3. [Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy \(CEWS\)](#): Up to 75 per cent wage subsidy for qualifying businesses, for up to 3 months, retroactive to March 15, 2020. This will help businesses to keep and return workers to the payroll.
4. [Regional Relief and Recovery Fund](#): This new fund officially launched on May 13, 2020 and provides funding to small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are unable to access the government’s existing support measures, and access to capital for rural businesses and communities. Applications are now being accepted under two streams:
 - a. **Regional Economy**: This stream supports provides \$213 million in support to southern Ontario SMEs that do not qualify for, or have been declined for, current Government of Canada COVID-19 relief measures.
 - b. **Community Futures**: This stream supports businesses in rural and smaller communities through additional funding for the existing Community Futures Program (CFP). In order to provide targeted assistance to the small towns and communities they serve, CFDCs, who will deliver this stream of funding, will focus on assisting “main street” businesses, such as retail shops, restaurants and corner stores, etc., and businesses of strategic importance to their communities, with loans up to \$40,000.

An Economic Response Framework for Frontenac County

Public Health officials have made clear that reopening the province will be a slow process, with different sectors of the economy being opened up over time while COVID-19 surveillance continues. It is important to note there is a risk of future shutdowns should another wave of the virus emerge prior to the development and distribution of an effective vaccine or treatment. At the time of writing (May 11, 2020), there are no known active cases of COVID-19 in KFL&A and no new cases have been reported for over two weeks.

The Economic Development Team has divided their response into three phases, each phase launching when the appropriate public health conditions exist. The dates outlined in this report are estimates, and can be expected to change according to provincial directions and public health conditions. It can be expected that consumer behaviour will have changed permanently in some respects, and businesses will need to continue to adapt hygiene protocols and product purchase options (curbside pickup, delivery, etc) during transition and recovery.

Phase:	Peak	Transition	Recovery
Estimated Timeframe:	March – June 2020	July – December 2020	January 2021 and beyond
Conditions of Phase:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Emergency in Place • Restricted Travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Emergency downgraded • Local travel, some provincial travel permitted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Emergency ended • Domestic travel permitted, limited international travel resumes

In addition, based on survey data and national trends, staff have grouped response efforts into four action areas:

1. Business Support

This action area focuses on providing local businesses with up-to-date information regarding support programs and government announcements. This information is delivered via web resources, videoconference and weekly email updates to the Frontenac Ambassador Network.

The Economic Development Team is working with partners such as the Frontenac CFDC to provide one-on-one advice regarding marketing, cash flow and business strategy in addition to providing small business loans.

2. Shop Frontenac

In order to get the local economy flowing quickly, it will be important to highlight the importance of buying local to our residents. As travel will continue to be

limited, the first markets available to our businesses are our local and neighbouring communities.

3. Prioritize Tourism

Tourism plays a significant role in the Frontenac economy. In January of 2020, Economic Development staff surveyed businesses and discovered that 59% of businesses benefit directly or indirectly from visitors to our region. Tourism will be one of the last industries to reopen, and the Ontario market will prove very competitive if international borders remain closed and consumers avoid air travel.

4. Establish Conditions for Investment and Growth

It is important to establish momentum as investors and businesses begin to capitalize on opportunities presented in the post COVID-19 landscape in 2021. The Economic Development Team will develop programs and services to prepare Frontenac County to be “investment ready.”

Appendix A to this report outlines the tactics associated with each of the above action areas.

Due to the highly fluid nature of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the newness of this situation, it is difficult to predict both the public health and economic trajectories associated with the crisis. It is still unknown if a ‘second wave’ of the virus may occur. Council will need to remain flexible and subsequent updates to this framework can be expected as a result of the changing conditions, evolving partnership, and new programs announced at other levels of government.

Changes to 2020-2024 Planning and Economic Development Business Plan

The following changes address existing economic development and tourism projects and programs outlined in the [2020-2024 Planning and Economic Development business plan](#).

- 1. Ferry by Foot Program:** Part of this program includes annual production of visitor guides. These guides will not be printed in 2020 due to the anticipated late start of the tourist season, but up-to-date material will be available online on a new visitor-focused tourism website (detailed further in this report.)
- 2. Farm-to-Table Initiatives (including Open Farms):** Staff will continue to promote Farm-to-Table initiatives in 2020, including planned campaigns with Visit Kingston. The primary goal of these initiatives is to strengthen the local market for small scale producers in Frontenac who often sell directly to restaurants, retailers or residents located in the Kingston-Frontenac region. Many local producers have seen increased demand during the COVID-19 crisis, and several have had to adapt to new customers and/or new ways to deliver their products to the customer.

With respect to Open Farms, staff do not plan to host an “in-person” event as seen in 2018 and 2019. Staff will consult with our partners and discuss options to

pursue a project that follows in the spirit of the event and helps to achieve the same goals of connecting the community to farmers, land and food.

3. **Ambassador Program:** The Frontenac Ambassador program has been the main avenue for communication and provision of support to small businesses in response to COVID-19. Report 2020-041 describes a series of ongoing initiatives being undertaken through the Frontenac Ambassador program to support local businesses during this uncertain time in the global economy.

- Up-to-date Web Resource: infrontenac.ca/covid19
- Monthly Surveys to capture data re: evolution of impact and response
- One to One Support (If appropriate - directed to CFDC)
- One to One Check in calls
- Weekly email updates
- Weekly Videoconference **Check In Calls** – Thursdays at 1:00pm

4. Accommodation Study Implementation

The 2017 Accommodation Review and Strategy for Growth recommends that Frontenac County continue to strengthen its tourism offering by completing annual investment and marketing plans and growing the exposure of the Frontenac regional brand. The strategy also recommends that the County and Townships revisit Community Improvement Plans in order to promote investment in the accommodations sector.

By making Tourism a clear priority with updated marketing channels and by creating a regional community improvement plan in response to COVID-19, milestones associated with the Accommodations Review and Strategy for Growth will also be completed.

5. **Web Portal:** The web portal at infrontenac.ca is a resource for businesses, visitors, and investors in Frontenac County. This site has been live since 2017 and was initially envisioned to fill a gap in online information for economic development purposes. In 2018 the county's main [website](#), was updated with much of the functionality required by the Economic Development team, and this website is now an effective platform to communicate Economic Development information. Since its launch, infrontenac.ca has served a secondary purpose as a place to provide information with respect to tourism.

With the closure of the Land O' Lakes Tourism Association in 2018, Frontenac Economic Development has slowly begun to coordinate tourism efforts and market tourism in the region. Evolving infrontenac.ca to a stand-alone tourism website will create a focal point for regional tourism marketing efforts, and a go-to online resource for tourists and tourism providers.

Staff will make InFrontenac.ca a tourism centred website, and migrate economic development related content to [Frontenac County website](#)

6. Visitor Attraction Initiatives

The small and seasonal businesses that are the backbone of the Frontenac tourism economy are most at risk during this crisis. With travel restrictions in place, both domestically and internationally, and changing consumer attitudes towards tourism, it will be important to support this segment of the local economy with strong brand positioning and marketing tactics sensitive to consumer attitudes.

As large scale events are expected to remain limited throughout 2020, the Event Incentive program will be placed on pause.

The 2020 Frontenac Visitor Guide has been produced and printed, however the content may no longer be relevant to a post-COVID world. This content will be updated and added to the improved [Tourism website](#)

The following initiative are new additions to the 2020-2024 Business plan, emerging as a result of the COVID-19 Crisis.

7. Shop Frontenac Web Marketplace

Now, more than ever, our small businesses will rely on local residents to continue their operations. Staff plan to create a single hub to advertise local businesses and their products under the Frontenac banner. As periods of physical distancing are expected to return with subsequent waves of COVID-19, this online marketplace will promote sales both locally and further afield for many local food producers, retail businesses, artists and makers regardless of public health recommendations.

By marketing these businesses under the Frontenac banner, it will be possible to achieve more reach collectively than for each business to be advertising alone. Undertaking this initiative collectively will also allow businesses that would not have otherwise attempted e-commerce on their own, the opportunity do so with less risk and less overhead costs. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, businesses have found new clients who have never used their service before, and this project is an opportunity to further this trend. Staff anticipate this service will become a permanent fixture in support of Frontenac businesses and ambassadors even after the COVID-19 pandemic has passed.

Significant funding is available to support the development of regional online market initiatives through OMAFRA. Staff have been approached about a potential collaboration with Frontenac Ambassadors who are enthusiastic about leading the development of this marketplace.

8. Community Improvement Plan

Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) are a tool that allows a municipality to direct funds and implement policy initiatives toward a specifically defined project

area. Section 28 of the *Planning Act* gives municipalities that have enabling policies in their official plans, the ability to prepare CIPs. Once implemented, the plan allows municipalities to provide tax assistance, grants or loans to assist with the achievement of strategic objectives associated with the improvement of lands and/or buildings within a defined Project Area. Frontenac County has the ability to create a regional CIP program that can identify the entire County as a Project Area. A review of Regional CIPs is underway and will explore best practices and options that will be brought forward at a future date. Any plan developed will engage local business and tourism stakeholders as part of the process of development.

9. Adaptation, Succession Planning and Business Transition

As business owners continue to struggle, adapt and shift with COVID-19, difficult decisions will have to be made about business strategy, succession, and business continuity. Staff propose contracting a resource in 2021 to support businesses owners in adaptation and, if necessary, to transition the business to new owners or a new ownership model. This project proposal will be brought forward as part of the 2021 Budget Process.

10. Broadband

The County needs to continue to support the EORN cellular and broadband initiatives. The pandemic has once again shone a light on the need for this vital service for businesses and families. The issue was also highlighted in the 2017 accommodation study. While the efforts of EORN mean that our region is leading Ontario in this regard and deserve our ongoing support, there may be some concurrent smaller projects that could have local impact that the County may wish to support or participate in. Physical assets such as the K&P Trail and municipal properties, including paramedic stations, fire halls and public works yards may hold value in terms of fibre access or internet points of presence (PoPs). Economic development staff will continue to look for potential projects and synergies in an effort to build upon the work of EORN.

11. Regional Review of Economic Development Services

The County was successful in its application to the Municipal Modernization Fund for a review of Economic Development service delivery in Frontenac County. This review was determine the most effective activities and collaborative structure between the County and its partners in the region. This terms of reference for this review will now consider which economic development activities will be critical for the local economy as our region emerges from COVID-19.

Implications for the Frontenac K&P Trail

In 2020, [a separate business plan](#) was developed for the Frontenac K&P Trail outlining capital and operational plans for the Trail.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic the Frontenac K&P Trail has seen record-breaking numbers of walkers, cyclists and, at times, ATV users. As one of the few recreational facilities to remain open in the region, residents from Kingston and Frontenac have

made the K&P Trail a regular destination for recreation and relief. Staff expect that local trails will remain popular during the COVID-19 Pandemic, even as restrictions on other recreational facilities and parks are relaxed.

As such, the Frontenac Economic Development team intends to continue with plans to increase promotion of the Frontenac K&P Trail for use by individuals and small groups. These plans include the renewal of the [K&P Trail interactive map](#) and increased social media promotion focused not just on the Trail infrastructure, but on the businesses, communities and experiences located along the trail corridor.

Capital development of the 14 kilometres of K&P Trail from Sharbot Lake to Clarendon Station is also still planned to take place in 2020.

Conclusion

As outlined above, the planned changes to the Economic Development Business Plan will focus Economic Development activities on efforts to create spending opportunities for small business and tourism operators while preparing to position Frontenac to support business investment, succession, and change in 2021.

As the future spread of COVID-19 is unknown at this time, it is difficult to anticipate future limitations placed on business in Frontenac. Staff expect new initiatives and opportunities to respond to COVID-19 to emerge later this year, and it can be assumed that additional initiatives will be proposed as part of the 2021 budget and business plan process.

Financial Implications

The approved 2020 budget for Economic Development is sufficient to cover the costs of the planned projects with savings realized from initiatives delayed or cancelled due to COVID-19. Partnerships will be sought with Regional Tourism Organizations and other funding agencies to expand the scope and impact of each of the planned tactics.

Strategic Priority Implications

Priority 1.2: Refine and invest in efforts to accelerate economic development — to grow businesses, attract more visits and expand the tax base.

Priority 3.2: Play a leadership role on communications to promote shared messaging for all regional initiatives such as economic development, tourism and lifestyle opportunities, and broadband and cell services.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Businesses in Frontenac County
Joe Gallivan, Director of Planning and Economic Development
David Millard, Manager of Information Services

Matt Mills, Communications Officer
Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (RTO11)
Southeastern Ontario (RTO9)
Anne Prichard, Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation
Corey Klatt, Manager of Community Development, North Frontenac Township
Claire Dodds, Director of Development Services, South Frontenac Township

Recommend Report to Council
Planning and Economic Development – Changes to 2020-2024 Business Plan to address changes to the local
economy related to the COVID-19 Pandemic
May 20, 2020

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Report 2020-056

Committee Information Report

To: Chair and Members of the Community Development Advisory Committee

From: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development

Prepared By: Alison Vandervelde, Community Development Officer

Date of meeting: June 11, 2020

Re: **Community Development Advisory Committee – Online Multi-Vendor Marketplace**

Recommendation

This report is for information only. It is intended to update the committee on the progress made on the online multi-vendor marketplace initiative.

Background

In response to the impacts of COVID-19, Economic Recovery Plans have popped up across the country, and in the face of reduced consumer activity and tourism, many economic development organizations are focusing efforts on stimulating local support for local businesses. This focus on shop local initiatives has led to the emergence of the Online Multi-Vendor Marketplace; essentially an e-commerce platform that brings together multiple local vendors under one virtual roof.

On April 23, 2020 staff attended a webinar hosted by the Economic Developer's Association of Canada and the University of Waterloo, showcasing the Downtown Belleville BIA's [Downtown District Marketplace](#). Staff from the BIA provided an overview of the platform and its development as an early and swift response to the closure of local businesses in downtown Belleville.

The site's first day of operation saw 2,000 unique visitors and 30 orders processed. In the first week of operation, the site processed approximately 90 orders, at an average sale of \$50 each. At the time of the webinar, BIA staff were working with 25 motivated businesses and were planning to onboard new vendors the following week. The initiative was stimulating local support for the local community, and staff suspected activity would continue to increase as the \$2,000 marketing campaign was still set to launch.

Staff reported that the online marketplace had boosted morale among business owners, gave them something positive and productive to collaborate on, and served as a rallying point for the community.

Encouraged by this success story, and knowing that while many small businesses in Frontenac do not currently operate e-commerce platforms, such digital infrastructure is critical to their long term resiliency and success, staff included the following initiative as a proposed addition to the 2020-2024 Economic Development Business Plan in [Report 2020-50](#), which County Council approved at its regular meeting on May 20, 2020:

In the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic our small businesses will rely on local residents to continue their operations more than ever. As a result, County Staff plan to create a single hub to advertise local businesses and their products under a single Frontenac banner. As periods of physical distancing are expected to return with subsequent waves of COVID-19, this online marketplace will promote sales both locally and further afield for many local food producers, retail businesses, artists and makers regardless of public health recommendations.

By marketing these businesses under the Frontenac banner, it will be possible to achieve more reach collectively than for each business to be advertising alone. Undertaking this initiative collectively will also allow businesses that would not have otherwise attempted e-commerce on their own, the opportunity do so with less risk and less overhead costs. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, many businesses have moved online and have found new clients who have never used their service before, and this project is an opportunity to further this trend. Staff anticipate this service will become a permanent fixture in support of Frontenac businesses and ambassadors even after the COVID-19 pandemic has passed.

Staff have been approached about a potential collaboration with Frontenac Ambassadors who are enthusiastic about leading the development of this marketplace.

Comment

In the two weeks following the May 20 County Council meeting, staff worked internally and with the business owner in question to explore the feasibility of an online Multi-Vendor Marketplace owned and operated by the County. Ultimately, it became clear that the County does not have appropriate resources available in-house to develop and manage such an initiative.

The business owner was able to make the necessary progress to begin the development of the platform as a private venture. The owner is investing the financial resources to cover the capital expenses associated with building the platform and has secured a partner to oversee its long-term management. They are currently working with a web developer and plan to have the platform ready for demonstration and vendor onboarding by the end of June, 2020.

Frontenac staff support the local leadership on this project which has potential to positively impact the business community across the region, and are lending support in the following ways:

1. The owner is developing the platform as a solution for all of Frontenac County, and as a regional undertaking it is naturally connected to the Frontenac brand. Staff are working with the owner and a graphic designer to ensure the platform's visual identity is related to the Frontenac brand in appropriate ways. There is a clear delineation between the entities, but applying the Frontenac design in a thoughtful way is mutually beneficial – it will lend credibility to the platform, while also strengthening the regional brand itself.
2. Once the platform is developed, Frontenac staff will help to create awareness among potential vendors. The owner's phase-in approach includes focusing on local food producers through 2020, and expanding to artisans, retailers, service providers, and so on in early 2021. Staff will promote the opportunity through the Frontenac Ambassador Network and the County's social media channels.
3. Consumer adoption of the platform is critical to its long-term success. The owner is currently seeking funding to contract a marketing specialist in order to develop an effective program aimed at turning Frontenac residents into early adopters and loyal long-term users of the platform. Staff are researching potential sources of funding. When the platform is operational, staff will also contribute to extending the reach of marketing efforts by sharing social media messages and through the potential development of a targeted shop local campaign.

Alignment with Strategic Plan

Direction under **Priority #1: Get behind plans that build community vitality and resilience in times of growth and change** includes:

In the two COVID-19 Business Impact Surveys, respondents indicated that they needed support to reach new customers and to develop web commerce options. This collaboration with a Frontenac Ambassador will support those needs and is also well aligned with one of the priorities of the Ambassador Network – increasing resident support of local businesses.

Financial Implications

The costs associated with the development of a multi-vendor marketplace are budgeted as part of the revised 2020 Economic Development Business Plan.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Members of Community Development Advisory Committee
County Council & staff
Local food producers in Frontenac



Report 2020-057

Committee Information Report

To: Chair and Members of the Community Development Advisory Committee

From: Alison Vandervelde, Community Development Officer

Date of meeting: June 11, 2020

Re: **Community Development Advisory Committee – Open Farms 2020, Virtual Format**

Recommendation

This Report is for information purposes only.

Background

Due to the impacts of COVID-19 and efforts to limit the spread of the virus, staff have made the decision to cancel Open Farms as an in-person event for 2020.

The pandemic has sparked a renewed interest in Canada's food systems and there has been a dramatic increase in demand for local food. So while the traditional Open Farms format is not possible this year, now is an important time to leverage the positive momentum of Open Farms and the renewed interest in local food to work toward the original goals of the event:

1. Educate consumers about small scale agriculture
2. Increase awareness of farms in Frontenac
3. Provide the opportunity for producers to connect directly with consumers
4. Provide the opportunity for producers to gain new long-term customers
5. Grow Frontenac's reputation as a region that produces good food

Comment

Preliminary conversations with local food producers and past Open Farms participants reveal support for transitioning Open Farms to a virtual format in 2020. At this early stage, staff suspect a virtual format could attract more producers to participate in the event, because:

1. The physical requirements of hosting hundreds of guests in a single day have prevented some farms from participating in the past. Removing that requirement creates a viable opportunity for smaller operations and for operations where biosecurity risks are unsurmountable.
2. Geography is no longer a limiting factor. In 2019 staff sought to attract new participating producers within clusters, to serve visitors' preference for visiting multiple locations within close proximity. The virtual format allows guests to "visit" farms all across Frontenac's vast area without any consideration for drive time or ferry capacity.

The following draft implementation plan outlines how an Open Farms branded social media campaign will leverage a series of highly personal, unique virtual farm tours and live virtual farmer chats along with education materials, farmer-created videos, and takeovers and livestreams to drive website traffic and convert the online audience to farm customers.

Draft Implementation Plan

1. Brand Messaging

To date Open Farms has been about connecting people, land, and food. While that overarching theme remains, developing a story that brings the consumer along to the new virtual format will be important in the success of the event. This will not be an extensive process, but will require some time investment upfront to ensure consistent and compelling messages throughout the campaign.

2. Website

The main destination for online traffic will be OpenFarms.ca, a central landing page on VisitFrontenac.ca. Content will be laid out in a structure that is highly visual and easy to navigate. Social media activity will drive users to the webpage, where they will be encouraged to consumer additional content and ultimately redirect to farm sales channels or to a central hub for purchasing (see 4. Conversion to Farm Customers).

3. Social Media Campaign

Frontenac staff will create a social media content calendar designed to leverage highly visual, highly sharable material in order to inform consumers, build awareness of local farms and drive website traffic. Material will include infographics, farm profile cards, virtual farm tours, and additional video content by farmers. Additionally, coordinated social media takeovers will leverage the organic reach of all participating farms' online audience.

Staff will work with participating farms and a graphic designer to create:

1. Infographics and "How To" Lists/Diagrams. Proposed ideas include:
 - a. Timeline – grocery store products vs locally produced products
 - b. Lifecycle of a local product (local food is slow food)
 - c. Benefits of local farming and local food
 - d. The consumer's role in local food production

- e. How to buy from a local producer
- f. How to eat seasonally
- g. How eating locally produced food can fit your budget

2. Farm Profile Cards

These cards will include the farm name, a photo of the farmer, a single sentence to summarize the farm’s philosophy, a list of products and directions for purchasing from the farm. These cards will provide an at-a-glance summary of all participating farms so consumers can start to understand the variety of local producers and products and start making some early decisions about purchasing.

Virtual Farm Tours:

Virtual Farm Tours will be a series of highly personal videos focusing on the most unique aspects of each participating farm. This video series will be the main replacement for the in-person aspect of the event. Staff propose to use the funds secured through the Regional Tourism Organization 9 (RTO 9) 2020 Partnership Fund Program for Open Farms for this virtual approach.

Staff will work with participating farms to produce additional content:

A series of live virtual farmer chats will allow rich interaction between producers and consumers. Staff will coordinate and host sessions via Zoom, and invite consumers to register for, attend and engage in each session. During these virtual chats, farmers will have the opportunity to provide an overview of their operations and agricultural philosophies, as well as answer questions from the audience.

Video is the most compelling form of content and ideally a Virtual Open Farms would include multiple videos per farm. However, staff resources are limited so beyond the Virtual Farm Tours, staff will rely on participating farms to produce additional video content. Potential topics include, following along during “chore time”, a behind-the-scenes look at a particular process or project on the farm, food storage and prep, etc. Staff will prepare video guidelines and offer limited production assistance as required.

4. Conversion to farm customers:

Beyond education and awareness, efforts will aim to convert the online audience to farm customers. Staff will pursue two possible options:

- 1. Option 1: Work with a partner to coordinate online sales or pre-orders of Open Farms Sampler Packages. Staff would develop a limited number of packages, which would all be identical and each include one product from participating producers. The packages would be priced to reflect the real value of all items. Staff would coordinate with producers to assemble the packages and manage the logistics of a centralized pick-up day. Potential partners for managing online sales might include a participating producer with an existing e-commerce system, a

farmers market in the region or the online multi-vendor marketplace currently being developed by a private business in Frontenac.

2. Option 2: If a suitable partner cannot be found, conversion efforts will drive online users to individual farm websites and/or individual farm sales channels.

Alignment with Strategic Plan

Priority #1: Get behind plans that build community vitality and resilience in times of growth and change

Financial Implications

The costs associated with coordinating the Open Farms Event are incorporated in the approved 2020 Economic Development budget.

Earlier this year staff were successful in securing \$4,250.00 in Partnership Funding from Regional Tourism Organization 9 – Southeastern Ontario (RTO 9) for the expansion and improvement of Open Farms as an in person event. In discussion, with RTO 9 staff, it is possible for an adapted event to still qualify for this partnership.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Regional Tourism Organization 9 – Southeastern Ontario
Members of Community Development Advisory Committee
Local food producers in Frontenac



Report 2020-058

Committee Information Report

To: Chair and Members of the Community Development Advisory Committee

From: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development

Prepared by: Emma Prichard, Digital Marketing Summer Student

Date of meeting: June 11, 2020

Re: **Community Development Advisory Committee – VisitFrontenac.ca Website Development**

Recommendation

This report is for information only. It is intended to solicit comments from the Committee on the transition from the economic development web portal infrontenac.ca to a new regional tourism website visitfrontenac.ca.

Background

The website infrontenac.ca is a resource for businesses, visitors, and investors in Frontenac County. This site has been live since 2017 and was initially created to fill a gap in online information for Economic Development purposes. In 2018, the county's main website, frontenacounty.ca, was updated to serve the majority of the needs required by the Economic Development team. This website is now an effective platform through which to communicate Economic Development-related information. Since its launch, infrontenac.ca has shifted to serve a secondary purpose as a place to provide information with respect to tourism.

With the closure of the Land O' Lakes Tourism Association in 2018, the Frontenac Economic Development team has begun to serve as a "Destination Management Organisation" (DMO) and has worked to coordinate tourism development and market the region to visitors.

At their regular meeting held on May 20, 2020 County Council approved recommended [changes to the Economic Development business plan](#) in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. One of these approved changes included an overall focus on Tourism promotion with the conversion of [infrontenac.ca](#) to a standalone visitor-focused website as a key initiative identified in the plan.

Discussion

Evolving [infrontenac.ca](#) to a stand-alone tourism website will create a focal point for regional tourism marketing efforts, and will become a key online resource for tourists and tourism operators across Frontenac County.

Currently, [infrontenac.ca](#) holds a combination of tourism-based content and of Economic Development content. Given the county's desire to promote and to increase tourism in Frontenac County, it is beneficial to have a clear separation between content designed for potential visitors and content designed for residents and/or business-owners.

Including Economic Development content on [infrontenac.ca](#) may be deterring possible visitors who are solely in search of tourist-based information, while often those seeking development information begin their search at [frontenacounty.ca](#) as it is the main government services website for the County.

The transition to a tourism-focused site has the potential to strengthen Frontenac County as a tourist destination, promote local business, and attract visitors.

Proposed Structure of VisitFrontenac.ca

The following is a proposed layout for the visit Frontenac site. The bold headings reflect the top menu options on the current site and the proposed new headings for [visitfrontenac.ca](#). The numbered lists reflect the proposed interior pages under each new top menu option. Many of these interior pages will feature tourism content taken directly from the current site, reorganized and placed in its appropriate category.

Our Community > Stay

1. Hotels, Motels & B&Bs
2. Cottages
3. Camping

Key Sectors > Explore & Do

1. Provincial Parks
2. Cycling Routes
3. Trails
4. Shop

Visit Frontenac > Local Food

1. Local Farms
2. Eat & Drink
3. Coffee in Frontenac
4. Source your Local Ingredients

Local Business > About

1. About Frontenac County
2. Maps
3. How to Get Here
4. Business Directory

Invest in Frontenac > Wolfe Island

1. Ferry Schedule
2. Eat & Drink on Wolfe Island
3. Stay on Wolfe Island
4. Explore & Do on Wolfe Island

Economic Development Information on frontenacounty.ca

In order to make room for this new structure, the Economic Development information currently on inFrontenac.ca will be transferred to the [Business in Frontenac](#) section on www.frontenacounty.ca. Working with the Manager of Information Services and the Communications officer, this section will be updated and rearranged as required. A preliminary review of economic development information has revealed some content is outdated or no longer useful, and staff will update content in order to develop a reasonable page structure within the Business in Frontenac section.

Ultimately, inFrontenac.ca will become VisitFrontenac.ca, and the inFrontenac.ca URL will be redirected to what is currently the [Business](#) page on frontenacounty.ca.

Summary

In order to prioritize tourism and to attract visitors to Frontenac County, we propose to make transition infrontenac.ca to visitfrontenac.ca, a tourism-based site. Economic Development content will shift to frontenacounty.ca, creating a clear separation between content aimed at tourists, and content aimed at residents and/or business owners. This will increase clarity in web content, strengthen the county as a tourist destination, and promote economic development overall.

Strategic Priorities

At its meeting on June 19, 2019, County Council approved [Frontenac County Strategic Plan 2019-2022](#). This project is aligned with the intent of the priorities listed below.

Priority 1.2: Refine and invest in efforts to accelerate economic development — to grow businesses, attract more visits and expand the tax base.

The transition to visitfrontenac.ca aligns with this priority, given its intent to attract more visitors to the region by placing a focus on tourism. Furthermore, this project is intended to accelerate economic development by highlighting local businesses and promoting them to possible visitors.

Priority 3.2: Play a leadership role on communications to promote shared messaging for all regional initiatives such as economic development, tourism and lifestyle opportunities, and broadband and cell services.

This project aligns with this priority as it aims to better the county's communication strategy in creating a clear divide between tourism-driven content and economic development content. This website will also serve to promote regional tourism and economic development by drawing visitors to the larger region.

Financial Implications

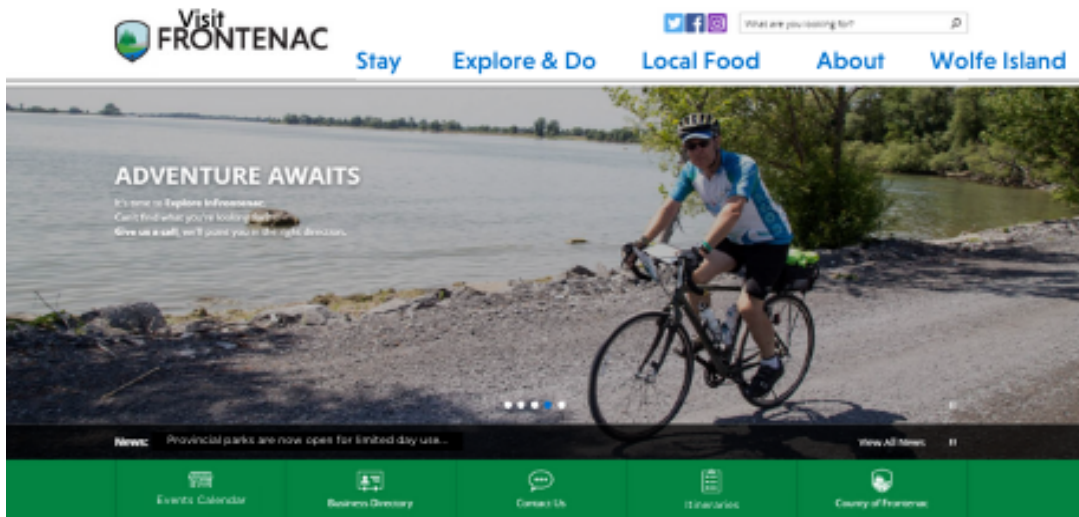
The hosting costs for the web portal // regional tourism website is included as part of the annual Economic Development budget.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

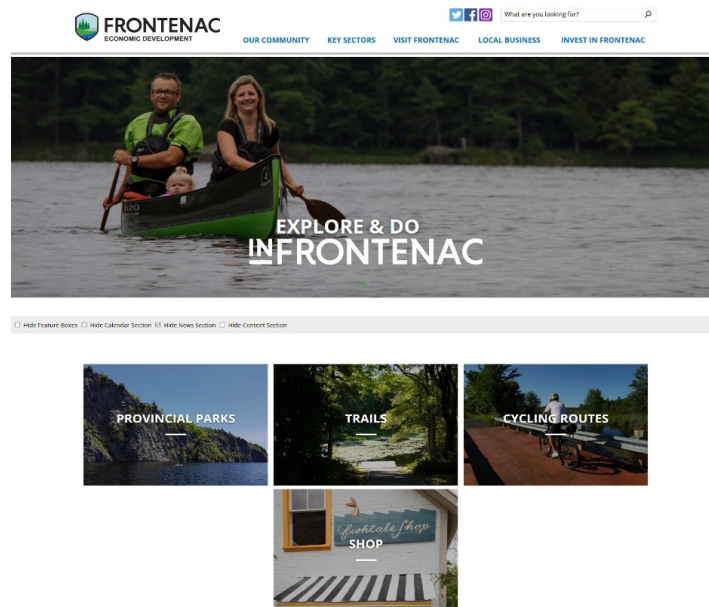
David Millard, Manager of Information Services
Matt Mills, Communications Officer
Regional Tourism Organisation 9 – Southeastern Ontario
Regional Tourism Organisation 11 – Ontario's Highlands
Rural Frontenac Tourism Group
Local Businesses in Frontenac

Appendix A: Sample Webpages

1- Main Landing Page



2 - Top level Landing Page



2- Interior page

See and Do ▾

- Adventure awaits at Frontenac Provincial Park
- **Bon Echo Provincial Park**
- Canoe and Kayak Rentals
- Family friendly hiking in Frontenac
- Grab a Bite!

Eat and Drink ▶

Stay

5 Things To Do This Month ▶


Wolfe Island ▶

Open Farms

Annual Events

Bon Echo Provincial Park

Home/Visit Frontenac/See and Do/Bon Echo Provincial Park A A A | 📄 | ➦ Share



Hide Left Content Hide Banner Image

By Clark Richards, Park Superintendent

At Bon Echo Provincial Park we believe life is better the minute we go outside on an adventure, big or small. An experience here inspires people to discover, enjoy, value and protect the rich natural and cultural resources forever.

The boundaries of the park permanently protect over 20,000 acres of diverse ecosystems, rich human history and rugged beauty. Bon Echo has 530 campsites offering a range of experiences including fully serviced waterfront cabins, yurts, exploration tents and car campsites to remote canoe and hiking trail-accessed backcountry campsites.

Some visitors come for a leisurely day excursion or multi-week vacation to relax on the sand beaches, learn about the park's cultural history and unwind around a campfire in the evening while staying in a full serviced cabin.

Other visitors like to incur some sweat equity and pursue a more physically challenging experience. Visitors can hike or trail run the 30km of trails, rock climb, canoe, portage and fish the 10 different lakes while staying on a serene backcountry campsite. There is a day or overnight experience and opportunity to connect with nature and history for everyone at the park. The awe-inspiring Mazinaw Rock and its rich history is one of the park highlights.

The expansive Mazinaw Rock is a remarkable geological and cultural feature located at the height of land between the Ottawa River and Lake Ontario watersheds. The granite cliff is 1.5km long and over 100m above Mazinaw Lake and is the site of over 260 Indigenous pictographs. The Mazinaw Rock remains a sacred place for indigenous peoples providing a connection with their past and a continuing spiritual resource in the present.




The Friends of Bon Echo Park Organization offer a guided tour boat experience to take in the rugged beauty of the Mazinaw Rock and learn about its fascinating history from a passionate onboard Park Interpreter. The Cliff Top trail leads to the highpoint on Mazinaw Rock offering spectacular views of the surrounding landscape. This trail can be accessed by tour boat or by canoe, kayak or standup paddleboard rentals through the Bon Echo Outfitters Contractor in the park.

This is just one of a multitude of tremendous outdoor experiences available during the spring, summer and fall at Bon Echo Provincial Park.expansive Mazinaw Rock is a remarkable geological and cultural feature located at the height of land between the Ottawa River and Lake Ontario watersheds.

We look forward to seeing you in the park on your next adventure.

Contact Us

Frontenac Economic Development
2069 Battersea Road, Glenburnie, Ontario K0H 1S0
Email: [Email Us](#)
Phone [613-548-9400](tel:613-548-9400)



Report 2020-059

Committee Information Report

To: Chair and Members of the Community Development Advisory Committee

From: Richard Allen, Manager of Economic Development

Prepared by: Emma Prichard, Digital Marketing Summer Student

Date of meeting: June 11, 2020

Re: **Community Development Advisory Committee – Frontenac K&P Trail Marketing Plan**

Recommendation

This report is for information only. It is intended to solicit advice from the Committee on the intended marketing plan for the Frontenac K&P Trail.

Background

Since 2008, Frontenac County has pursued the redevelopment of the former K&P railway corridor between Kingston and Lanark County as a multi-use, recreational trail. Development has taken place in 3 phases between Kingston and Sharbot Lake, with additional work scheduled to take place between Sharbot Lake and Clarendon Station in 2020. Since 2018, County staff have worked to improve the visibility of the K&P Trail in the region, and to promote the experience to visitors. To support this effort, the development and implementation of a Marketing Plan for the K&P Trail was identified in the 2020-2024 Frontenac K&P Trail business plan.

During March, April and May of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic, the Frontenac K&P Trail saw an unprecedented boost in trail use due to its availability and the space being large enough to accommodate the required physical distancing.

Discussion

As the Ontario economy slowly reopens and begins its recovery from the shutdown associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is anticipated that trail use will continue to be a popular activity for users from the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington region, with local residents continuing to seek safe spaces to enjoy the outdoors.

There are many businesses beginning to reopen across Frontenac County, a number of which are located near the Frontenac K&P trail. As the use of the trail increases, the potential number of customers at trailside business often increases as well. A guiding principle for the marketing approach to the Frontenac K&P Trail is to highlight trailside businesses and strengthen the potential economic activity for these businesses. This will be done by balancing the promotion of the Frontenac K&P Trail experience with the destinations or “points-of-interest” located on or near the trail. The use of interactive marketing tools and campaigns have the potential both to bring people to the trail itself, as well as to get them in the doors of local businesses, thus promoting economic development.

Furthermore, trails are often a strong driver of tourism to a region. Promoting the K&P Trail as a tourist destination and as an attraction within Frontenac County has the potential to bring more people to the region, when travel is appropriate. Potential visitors to the region may connect to the Frontenac K&P Trail via marketing efforts, and add it to their list of “to do” experiences.

1. Instagram

Goal

Build the [@kptrail](#) Instagram account as a way to encourage tourism in the region, engage with the community, share updates, promote events, and support local business.

Steps

1. Collect existing photos of the K&P Trail
 - Draw upon existing images in our database, as well as upon user generated images
2. Advertise the [@kptrail](#) Instagram on other Frontenac platforms
 - Re-share K&P Instagram posts on [@frontenacounty](#)
 - Post in the K&P trail Facebook group
3. Regularly re-share user trail photos to Instagram
 - This will subsequently encourage users to continue sharing their photos on the trail, thus promoting the experience.
4. Encourage use of the [#kptrail](#) hashtag among visitors and businesses
 - This will allow an accessible database of images to re-share
5. Business profiles
 - Start a spotlight series on local businesses near to the trail
 - Share a photo of the business with a quick graphic of information about them and their current operations
6. Hold a contest
 - In later months, invite people to share photos interacting with local businesses trailside for the chance to win a prize

2. Website Content

Goal

Our website has the potential to draw tourists not only to Frontenac County, but to the K&P Trail itself. It is important that the website shares not only how to access the trail, but points of interest along the way, specifically local businesses.

Steps

1. Update the [existing interactive map](#)
 - Incorporate Google camera project or something similar to show a virtual “trail-view” experience, similar to Google Street View.
2. Include trailside business profiles on the map
 - Many businesses are located very close to the trail but are not visible while on the trail
 - Including them clearly on a map encourages visitors to plan to step off the trail and visit local businesses
3. Include ‘Trail Stories’ on the website
 - People can share their stories, histories etc.
 - In the form of blog posts

3. Create Trail Itineraries

Goal

Draw people to the trail by providing them with specific itineraries to follow, businesses to visit, and places to stop.

Steps

1. Create targeted schedules of trail journeys
 - a. For example, 5km family walk, 10km morning bike ride etc.
2. Plan geographical logistics
 - a. Include a map tracing the route
 - b. Information about where to park and enter the trail
3. Include stops at trailside business
 - a. For example, recommending somewhere to stop for a meal, a place to look for a gift, and a spot to grab bug spray etc.

4. K&P Passport Project

Goal

Increase K&P trail use and encourage users to visit trailside businesses, thus promoting both tourism and economic development.

Steps

1. Create a 'passport' designed to replicate the look of an old railway ticket.
 - a. These will be available as a PDF on our website to print off, or also at local businesses.
 - b. The passport will have spots for a certain number of 'stations' to be visited and completed.
2. Designate certain places & businesses as 'rail stations'.
 - a. We will contact trailside businesses to act as stations that people can visit on their journey to complete their passport.
 - b. Certain natural or artistic landmarks can also serve as such stations.
3. Create personalized stamps to fill in the passport.
 - a. When at a 'station', people can stamp their passport to prove that they visited a certain place or business.
4. Offer a small prize for completing passport
 - a. If someone sends in a photo of their completed passport, they will receive a small prize, likely a patch.

5. K&P Trail Gnomes

Goal

Engage people on the trail and increase publicity with a quirky initiative.

Steps

1. Purchase 8-12 unique garden gnomes.
 - a. They will be labelled with the Frontenac County logo, as well as with information about their purpose.
2. Place these gnomes alongside the K&P trail at different locations
 - a. These locations should be predominantly near businesses, to encourage people to visit businesses while interacting with the gnomes
3. Encourage visitors to take photos with the gnomes and share on Social Media.
 - a. They are also encouraged to gently move a gnome to another spot on the trail to contribute to the activity.

Summary

The K&P Trail has the potential to serve as a leading tourist destination, bringing people to Frontenac County. Given the number of trailside businesses, it is important that a marketing strategy seek to create customers of trail visitors, encouraging regular trail use and support of local business.

Strategic Priorities

At its meeting on June 19, 2019, County Council approved [Frontenac County Strategic Plan 2019-2022](#). This project is aligned with the intent of the priority listed below.

Priority 1.2: Refine and invest in efforts to accelerate economic development — to grow businesses, attract more visits and expand the tax base.

The proposed marketing plan for the K&P Trail focuses on economic development by offering incentives to visit local businesses along the trail. Furthermore, the plan also ultimately seeks to attract visitors, thus building tourism and increasing economic development.

Financial Implications

The existing 2020 K&P Trail operating budget will support the activities identified with the 2020 K&P Trail Marketing Plan. This department is able to execute this plan through the Digital Marketing Summer Student role, a temporary role from May – August.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Businesses in proximity to the Frontenac K&P Trail
Regional Tourism Organization 9 – Southeastern Ontario
Regional Tourism Organization 11 – Ontario’s Highlands



Report 2020-060

Committee Information Report

To: Chair and Members of the Community Development Advisory Committee

From: Alison Vandervelde, Community Development Officer

Date of meeting: June 11, 2020

Re: **Community Development Advisory Committee – One-on-One Digital Support Sessions**

Recommendation

This Report is for information purposes only.

Background

In order to support Frontenac Ambassadors wanting to enhance their online presence, staff partnered with the Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation and Kingston Economic Development to offer one-on-one digital support sessions on Friday, consultant at Kingston Economic Development, worked with several Ambassadors through their individual digital challenges and provided advice tailored to their unique skillsets and situations

In the face of business closures due to COVID-19 regulations, many Frontenac Ambassadors started investing time earlier this spring to review and enhance their digital strategies. To once again support those businesses, staff coordinated another round of one-on-one digital support sessions with Mr. Morris.

Comment

Over the course of two days: Friday, May 22 and Monday, May 25, Mr. Morris met with 12 business owners; a mix of farmers, artists, retailers, service, and tourism businesses.

Mr. Morris reported that nearly all businesses were looking for help with their website (design, marketing, attracting organic traffic, e-commerce) and with their social media strategy.

Mr. Morris also provided the following summary to help staff understand some of the unique situations facing Frontenac businesses:

Some businesses have launched or want to launch an e-commerce site. Some sites were under development, and some didn't exist at all. I was interested to see that a couple of the business owners I spoke to who were in their 60s or 70s were quite skilled or at least very comfortable with digital marketing - not what I would expect from seniors living in a rural area!

Over the course of the 12 meetings, I talked about planning and scheduling a digital marketing campaign, whether it's a blog, social media platform, or email newsletter. I reviewed the basics of SEO with most businesses. For those who have e-commerce stores or were looking to start one, I reviewed best practices for SEO optimization, and discussed shipping strategies (free shipping, flat rate shipping, etc.) and did an overview of some of the platforms available (Shopify, Squarespace, Wix).

One business said they don't need or want a website because they are selective about who stays with them and they are always full with minimal marketing. Another business was reluctant to start a website after a bad experience through GoDaddy. They had hoped Facebook would be enough of an internet presence. I told them that Facebook alone wouldn't be enough and encouraged them to look at Wix or Squarespace.

Most businesses saw the value in moving towards e-commerce, or to having a strong web presence. There was a general feeling that social isn't doing enough for them - this was often from those who aren't very comfortable on the platform. I helped them understand the Insights feature so they can better track the performance of their content.

Staff have received notes appreciating the opportunity to meet with Chris, along with positive feedback on the session format and expert advice provided. Working with our community partners, One-on-One Digital Support Sessions are a valuable tool we can continue offering to Frontenac Ambassadors as demand dictates.

Alignment with Strategic Plan

Priority #1: Get behind plans that build community vitality and resilience in times of growth and change speaks directly to the ongoing need for these digital support sessions. The closure of many small businesses in March, April and May have served to highlight how critically important a strong digital strategy is to the long term resiliency of small businesses.

Financial Implications

As they are delivered in partnership with Community Futures Development Corporation and Kingston Economic Development, there is no cost to Frontenac County in delivering the One-on-One Digital Support Sessions.

Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected

Frontenac Ambassadors and other Local Businesses
Frontenac CFDC
Kingston Economic Development