



Minutes

Municipality of Thames Centre

Economic Development Advisory Committee

December 12, 2024, 9:00 A.M.

**Municipal Office - Council Chambers
4305 Hamilton Road, Dorchester, ON**

Members Present: Tom Heeman, Chair/Council Representative
Arden McClean, Vice-Chair/Community Representative
Sharron McMillan, Council Representative
Jacob Baribeau, Community Representative
Chelsea Hicks-Webster, Community Representative
James Iglesias, Community Representative
Delia Reiche, Community Representative (*arrived at 9:41 a.m.*)

Members Absent: Jeff Crosby, Community Representative
Chris Green, Community Representative
Glenn Thorel, Community Representative
Helen Wilson, Community Representative

Staff Present: David Barrick, Chief Administrative Officer
Amanda Storrey, Director of Planning and Development Services
Mike Ramnanan, Communications Manager
Sara Henshaw, Deputy Clerk/Recording Secretary

1. Call To Order

Chair Heeman called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

2. Approve Agenda

Resolution # EDAC-027-24

Moved by: J. Baribeau

Seconded by: C. Hicks-Webster

THAT the December 12, 2024 Regular Meeting Agenda of the Economic Development Advisory Committee **BE ADOPTED** as presented.

Carried.

3. Disclosure Of Pecuniary Interest

No pecuniary interests were disclosed.

4. Previous Minutes

4.1 September 12, 2024

4.2 November 14, 2024

Resolution # EDAC-028-24

Moved by: S. McMillan

Seconded by: J. Baribeau

THAT the minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee regular meeting held on September 12, 2024 **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT the minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee special meeting held on November 14, 2024 **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried.

5. Presentations/Delegations

5.1 Community Murals

Andrew Gunn, of Andrew Gunn Consulting Inc., was in attendance and provided a presentation on Murals in Southern Ontario 2020-2024.

A. Gunn provided examples of local murals and the stories they tell, and how this can be tied into business communities and soft tourism.

The Committee inquired about the maintenance required for murals. A. Gunn advised that a protective coating can be used, the artist can be

brought back to make touchups, and there is an included budget for maintenance.

The Committee inquired about the potential for a mural in Thorndale and how consistent corn dust could impact the painting.

A. Gunn advised the protective coating could be used and it could also be pressure-washed.

The Committee inquired about the process to acquire an artist and the vision for the painting.

A. Gunn advised that his company reviews the artist, the story behind the imagery, and what people in the community want.

The Committee discussed its own engagement in the process of acquiring a mural, including the usage of potential project funding, and providing recommendations and budget requests to Council.

The Committee discussed A. Gunn's potential role in that process, as possibly being a facilitator to find donors and locations.

The Committee inquired about the cost to utilize Andrew Gunn Consulting Inc. A. Gunn advised it would be under \$10,000.

The Committee inquired about how everyone can agree on the same painting, as well as the process of selecting an artist.

Member Reiche arrived at 9:41 a.m.

The Committee also inquired about the average mural cost from design to completion, and if it could be measured per square foot.

A. Gunn advised that for commercial painting, it could roughly be around \$5 per square foot, whereas murals could roughly be around \$25-30 per square foot.

Resolution # EDAC-029-24

Moved by: J. Baribeau

Seconded by: C. Hicks-Webster

THAT the presentation by Andrew Gunn, of Andrew Gunn Consulting Inc., regarding Community Murals **BE RECEIVED** for information;
AND THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee **RECOMMEND** that staff gather additional information with Andrew Gunn Consulting Inc. for a potential facilitator partnership for community murals.

Carried.

5.2 Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA) - The Value of Business Improvement Areas (BIA's)

Kay Matthews, Executive Director of the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association, was in attendance and provided a presentation regarding the Value of Business Improvement Areas (BIA's), as appended to the agenda.

The Committee inquired about the relationship between this Committee and a BIA. K. Matthews advised that it would be a connected relationship, and that a BIA must have one or more municipal representatives on its Board.

K. Matthews further advised that a BIA receives its funding through a levy, versus a municipal budget.

The Committee asked for examples of other comparable local municipalities that have a BIA.

The Committee discussed the benefits of BIA's including providing structure, having formal funding and inclusivity.

The Committee discussed potential costs of the levy per year for local businesses.

David Barrick, Chief Administrative Officer, advised that the levy wouldn't be a flat rate per property, as it's based on the assessment of the property from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).

The Committee discussed the importance of taking the time to have thorough consultations with the community.

K. Matthews advised that funding starts from the levy, however BIA's may receive additional funding through grants, vendors and sponsorships.

The Committee discussed the increased chances of receiving funding when applying as a registered BIA.

The Committee discussed the value to the business received from the cost of the levy and the benefits of shared administration.

K. Matthews described the consultation process with property owners/tenants.

K. Matthews recommended when reviewing potential BIA boundaries, that staff also review in conjunction the planning boundaries and Community Improvement Plan (CIP) boundaries.

Resolution # EDAC-030-24

Moved by: D. Reiche

Seconded by: S. McMillan

THAT the presentation by Kay Matthews, Executive Director of the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association, regarding the Value of Business Improvement Areas (BIA's) **BE RECEIVED** for information;

AND THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee **RECOMMEND** that staff investigate the possibility of the implementation of a Thames Centre Business Improvement Association;

AND THAT staff **REPORT BACK** at a future meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

Carried.

6. Reports of Staff

6.1 2025 Meeting Dates

Resolution # EDAC-031-24

Moved by: J. Iglesias

Seconded by: J. Baribeau

THAT Report No. EDAC-003-24 **BE RECEIVED** for information;
AND THAT the following schedule of meeting dates for 2025 **BE APPROVED**:

- Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
- Thursday, May 22, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
- Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
- Thursday, December 11, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

Carried.

7. Committee Business

7.1 Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) Program - Call for Applications (Discussion)

7.2 Signage for Thorndale and Dorchester Business Parks (Discussion)

The Committee discussed the lack of promotional signs for the Business Parks in Thames Centre.

The Committee discussed the benefits of having clear communication and promotional strategies with respect to the Business Parks.

Resolution # EDAC-032-24

Moved by: J. Iglesias

Seconded by: C. Hicks-Webster

THAT Committee Business Agenda Items 7.a. and 7.b. **BE RECEIVED** for information;

AND THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee **RECOMMEND** that staff reach out to Middlesex County regarding promotional options for the Business Parks in Thames Centre, including the viability of Business Parks signs for Dorchester and Thorndale;

AND THAT staff **REPORT BACK** at a future meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

Carried.

8. Correspondence

No items.

9. Unfinished Business

9.1 Thames Centre - Environmental Advisory Committee

Resolution passed by the Environmental Advisory Committee at the regular meeting held on February 5, 2024:

THAT the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) recommends to Council the creation of a recognition program for land stewardship;

AND THAT two awards be given on an annual basis:

- Green Champion Award to a qualified individual who has demonstrated excellence in advancing a green initiative and is a resident of Thames Centre; and
- Community Champion Award to a qualified applicant who has demonstrated environmental leadership within a community organization within Thames Centre.

THAT a third award category be created to award a business that has initiated ongoing environmental initiatives or projects in Thames Centre;

AND THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

9.2 Ontario - Consultation: Rural Economic Development Survey

This item was originally included in the February 29, 2024 meeting agenda of this committee under "Correspondence", and was referred to this agenda by the committee for further discussion.

Please visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/consultation-rural-economic-development-strategy>

9.3 Middlesex County Economic Development - Post-Presentation Discussion

Committee discussion regarding the presentation provided at the Special Meeting held on June 21, 2024 by Cara Finn of Middlesex County, regarding Economic Development and Tourism.

9.4 Invest Ontario - Partner Portal

From the website:

"As part of Team Ontario, Invest Ontario works in partnership with municipalities and other entities to attract investment to the province. The Partner Portal is our central resource hub designed to enhance collaboration. It provides analytics and data tools to support our partners in their investment attraction efforts."

See below link:

<https://www.investontario.ca/PartnerPortal>

Resolution # EDAC-033-24

Moved by: S. McMillan

Seconded by: J. Baribeau

THAT Unfinished Business Items 9.a. through 9.d. **BE RECEIVED** for information;

AND THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee **SUPPORTS** the Environmental Advisory Committee's creation of a recognition program for land stewardship and **SUPPORTS** an award category being created to award businesses that have initiated ongoing environmental initiatives or projects in Thames Centre.

Carried.

10. New Business

Includes other business items requiring direction.

No items.

11. Scheduling of Meetings

Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss it was:

Resolution # EDAC-034-24

Moved by: S. McMillan

Seconded by: J. Baribeau

RESOLVED THAT the meeting adjourn at 11:03 a.m.

Carried.