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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2023-INFO-27
Date: April 14, 2023

Subject:

North Durham Online Business Toolkits

Recommendation:

Receive for information

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the newly created north Durham Business Toolkits and outline planned promotional efforts to ensure they are reaching desired audiences.

2. Background

2.1 The Agriculture and Rural Economic Development section of the Economic Development and Tourism Division (Invest Durham) supports economic development efforts and initiatives in the Townships of Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge (north Durham) and led the development of the Business Toolkits with support from area municipal staff.

2.2 Business Toolkits were developed for each north Durham municipality to fulfill a need for a one-stop-shop for relevant, Township-specific and up-to-date business resources that are more easily accessible to prospective investors, entrepreneurs, and current business owners.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

3.1 [Growing North Durham: Rural Economic Development Action Plan \(Report 2023-EDT-2\)](#)

3.2 The development of online business information toolkits for each north Durham municipality was a key action identified under the Investment Readiness goal of this Plan.

4. Business Toolkit Content

4.1 While each toolkit follows a similar format, the information, resources and design have been tailored to each specific municipality, see links below.

- a. Township of Brock: TownshipOfBrock.ca/BusinessToolkit
- b. Township of Scugog: Scugog.ca/BusinessToolkit
- c. Township of Uxbridge: Uxbridge.ca/BusinessToolkit

4.2 Toolkits have been designed with ease of use in mind, and information is organized into the following categories:

- a. **The (Township Name) Advantage:** Toolkits begin with community information tailored towards prospective investors interested in the municipality as a place to do business. Resources include community profiles, regional data reports, strategic plans, etc.
- b. **Starting or Expanding Your Business:** This section includes information and resources of interest to investors or entrepreneurs who have decided to establish a physical presence for their business in the respective municipality and need information on next steps (e.g. site selection, building permits, business licences, development charges, etc.).
- c. **Operating Your Business:** This section includes relevant information for existing business owners and entrepreneurs within the municipality such as resources for hiring local talent, shop local initiatives, local business support organizations, etc.

- d. **Connect with Us:** Contact information for Invest Durham's Rural Economic Development Specialist is included should users have further questions or would like to discuss their investment opportunities in greater detail.

4.3 With support from administrative staff from each Township, Invest Durham's Rural Economic Development Specialist will be responsible for ensuring information and resources within the toolkit are kept up-to-date and new information is added as necessary.

5. Promoting the Business Toolkits

5.1 A series of promotional post-cards have been created for each Township. The post-cards incorporate local branding/colours, logos, natural assets and local landmarks.

5.2 In addition, electronic graphics and matching banner images for the toolkit webpages have been developed to promote the toolkit online.

5.3 Planned activities to promote these toolkits include:

- a. Printing of business toolkit postcards and distribution to members of local Council and appropriate staff, to be available for distribution to businesses during meetings (e.g. grand openings, economic development business visits, etc.)
- b. Distribution of printed postcards to local Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, BIAs, and other offices/facilities where target audiences may visit
- c. A social media campaign in partnership with northern area municipalities and business support organizations
- d. Inclusion in economic development and township newsletters
- e. Word-of-mouth

6. Relationship to Strategic Plan

6.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

Goal 3: Economic Prosperity

- 3.1 Position Durham Region as the location of choice for business
- 3.2 Leverage Durham's prime geography, social infrastructure, and strong partnerships to foster economic growth

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 With the creation of local business toolkits to serve north Durham, the Townships of Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge are now equipped with a centralized resource for prospective investors and current business owners/entrepreneurs to source valuable resources and information.
- 7.2 As next steps, staff will work with area municipal representatives to share information about how to access and utilize the toolkits. Members of local Council and business support organizations will be instrumental in promoting these toolkits to the local business communities across north Durham.
- 7.3 This report will be sent to the Townships of Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge, as well as the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP
Commissioner of Planning and
Economic Development