



Economic Development Staff Report

Report Number: A06-2024
Report Title: Collaborative Marketing Opportunity for St. Jacobs Country
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Reviewed By: David Brenneman
Final Review: Chief Administrative Officer

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Township of Woolwich, considering Report A06-2024 respecting Collaborative Marketing Opportunity for St. Jacobs Country:

1. Approve \$20,000.00 as a contribution to the 2024 St. Jacobs Holiday Campaign from the Municipal Accommodation Tax; and
2. Direct staff to develop a strategy for the ongoing and long-term use of the Municipal Accommodation Tax.

Background:

Economic Development and Tourism staff have been working with the Tourism industry since 2021 to determine a marketing path forward to promote the Township as a place for visitors and to encourage extended stays. Staff worked with some of Woolwich's key tourism attractions to find common ground and an interest in collaboration. Since then, these stakeholders have banded together on a unified marketing campaign that will be far more effective in driving tourism to both St. Jacobs and greater Woolwich during November and December than any individual stakeholder's efforts.

Comments:

The attached unified marketing campaign highlights key holiday events including the Farmers' Market Sip n' Shops, the St. Jacobs Business Improvement Area's Sparkles event, Drayton Entertainment's family pantomime and Waterloo Central Railway's holiday

train, positioning St. Jacobs as a destination for a unique rural holiday experience, distinct from typical urban holiday offerings.

The campaign's tagline, "Reconnect with St. Jacobs", was collaboratively chosen by the tourism partners. It plays on the idea of inviting guests to return while also emphasizing the connection between attractions.

Targeting families and couples from cities like Mississauga, Toronto, Hamilton, and London, the campaign will feature a mix of digital, print, and billboard ads.

The attached budget outlines how this campaign will be shared amongst the key tourism attractions, the Township of Woolwich, and Explore Waterloo Region.

Economic Development and Tourism staff are working with the industry, Explore Waterloo Region, and the other Regional municipalities to develop a strategy for the ongoing use of the Municipal Accommodation Tax. The strategy will also define the Economic Development and Tourism department's role in Tourism management and marketing in the Township of Woolwich. Attached you will see letters of support for this collaboration.

Interdepartmental Impacts:

None.

Financial Impacts:

The Township of Woolwich's contribution of \$20,000.00 will come from the Municipal Accommodation Tax.

Community Strategic Plan Impacts:

We will develop and enhance the downtown cores of our communities to facilitate community connections and foster economic vibrance.

Conclusion:

Economic Development and Tourism staff are excited to work collaboratively with the sector to promote Woolwich as a place to visit. It is recommended that the Municipal Accommodation Tax be utilized to fund this holiday campaign, which will expand the tourism experience and ultimately increase overnight stays for visitors in the Township of Woolwich.

Attachments:

1. St. Jacobs Holiday Campaign 2024 Assets
2. Budget
3. Letters of Support

- a. Drayton Entertainment
- b. St. Jacobs Market District
- c. St. Jacobs Village Business Improvement Area
- d. W Group (Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Staybridge Suites)
- e. Hilton (Hampton Inn & Suites, Homewood Suites)