



Staff Report

Report To: Dan Best, Chief Administrative Officer
From: **Scott Currie, Manager of Community Services**
Date: October 7 2019
Report: CSD 13.2019
Subject: South Huron Youth Engagement Strategy

Recommendations:

That South Huron Council receives the report from S.Currie, Manager of Community Services titled "South Huron Youth Engagement Strategy" and,

That, to engage South Huron youth in building the future of their community, Council approves the following action plan:

- 1. A Terms of Reference be drafted to establish a South Huron Youth Council for Council's consideration;**
- 2. A Terms of Reference for a Youth Volunteer of the Year Award be drafted for Council's Consideration;**
- 3. An area dedicated to youth is integrated into the design of a new multi-use recreation facility to act as an inclusive space for fostering creativity, problem solving and community building;**
- 4. A marketing campaign targeting youth is created that highlights local employers and the opportunities they offer along with the skills they are seeking.**

Purpose:

Approval.

Background and Analysis:

With funding provided by the Province of Ontario through the Rural Ontario Institute, the Municipality hired a Youth Engagement Strategist to research and develop a South Huron Youth Engagement Strategy.

Input for this strategy was sought from the community using social media, one-on-one stakeholder meetings and an online survey open to anyone to participate. The full strategy, including all public input received, is attached to this report.

Based on an objective analysis of community feedback, eight strategic items are identified to make South Huron more youth friendly. Each strategic item is listed below along with preliminary actions recommended by staff.

Strategic Item 1: Attract Entertainment

The Municipality looks to attract some sort of entertainment activity to give youth a place to socialize. This could include a bowling alley, movie theatre, arcade or a youth centre.

Staff recommend that a space dedicated to youth be incorporated into plans for a new multi-use recreation facility. This area would serve as an inclusive space for fostering creativity, problem solving and community building among young people.

To attract private sector providers of entertainment, staff recommend the Municipality continue to project an open-for-business mindset in marketing materials, including website and social media content. Local economic development success stories will be marketed regionally to attract additional investment interest.

Strategic Item 2: Enhance Recreation

The Municipality continues the recreation planning discussion. Participants would like to see more options with affordable rates and progress on enhancing recreation opportunities in South Huron.

South Huron Council is currently working on a concept to develop a new multi-use recreation facility. This project will lead to enhanced recreation opportunities in the long term. In the near-term, the Municipality is updating its Master Recreation Plan, which will include a series of recommendations for staff to follow up on to enhance recreational opportunities. Staff will continue to seek out partnerships with groups or individuals that want to deliver programming at community halls in South Huron.

Strategic Item 3: Youth Volunteer Recognition

The Municipality creates some sort of recognition for those individuals that put time into the betterment of our community. This could take the form of a youth volunteer-of-the-year award.

Staff will continue to work with the Exeter BIA and South Huron Chamber of Commerce to promote the South Huron Business and Community Excellence Awards, including the “Youth Excellence” category. However, staff recommend that a Terms of Reference be drafted for a program to recognize and reward youth volunteerism in the form of a youth scholarship grant.

Strategic Item 4: Youth Council

The Municipality enacts a youth council to provide input on community projects. The youth council would also help further youth engagement and host events in the community.

Staff recommend that a Terms of Reference be created for a South Huron Youth Council. Facilitated by staff, this program would promote civic engagement as the group meets bi-monthly (in-person and online) to discuss issues before Council as well as pertinent societal topics. This program would also be administered as a professional development opportunity for participants.

One project that a Youth Council could help develop/advise on is a South Huron Skills Incubator Program that, through partnerships, builds professional and personal capabilities of youth using training, mentoring and facilitated learning opportunities.

Strategic Item 5: Carry on Youth Engagement

The Municipality commits to ongoing engagement with the community on youth friendly initiatives.

Staff will update the community on the status of youth initiatives through reports to Council, newspapers and the use of social media. The community is invited to join the conversation online using **#SouthHuronYouth**. Community engagement software will be explored (*Engagement HQ* by Bang the Table) to provide enhanced opportunities for the public to provide input on municipal projects.

Strategic Item 6: Public Engagement

More opportunities for public engagement are created. This could include more open houses, coffee & chats with the Mayor etc.

Staff will coordinate with Council to pursue opportunities for in-person interactions with community groups and participation on special projects. Staff will seek out partners to host social networking and professional development opportunities in the area.

Strategic Item 7: Communications

The Municipality communicates more with the public and has a bigger presence on social media. Communicating more with the public will also help the transparency issue identified by some project participants. This could include promoting the dates of council meetings and streaming council meetings.

Staff are reviewing ways to improve information sharing with the public using new technology and will follow up with a report to Council in early 2020. In the past six months, the Municipality has launched an Instagram account and is piloting community engagement software called *Engagement HQ* by Bang the Table.

Strategic Item 8: Employment Campaign

The Municipality works with the BIA and Chamber to conduct a campaign highlighting the range of jobs in the region.

As submitted by a survey participant, "South Huron could benefit from a campaign that is targeted to youth that showcases the opportunities in the area. Skills Training -Youth all over the country are increasingly in need of cutting edge, innovative skills training."

Staff recommend continuing to work with partners like the BIA, SHCC and County Economic Development Department to develop youth-focused marketing campaigns highlighting jobs in the area. Activities to pursue in 2020 include a virtual job fair featuring short videos of local jobs, news stories/ social media posts featuring employer profiles, and youth-oriented familiarization tours of employers.

Operational Considerations:

An action plan will be created and resourced through the 2020 budgetary planning process, external grant funding opportunities and through collaboration with community stakeholder groups.

South Huron's Strategic Plan:

This initiative falls under strategic item 7.2.4 "Develop and Implement a Community Vitality Strategy".

Financial Impact:

Staff are preparing a detailed budget of the following items for Council's consideration as part of 2020 budget deliberations.

Initiative		Cost	Notes
1.	South Huron Youth Council	\$5,000	<p>Webinar participation, delegation travel, conference registration.</p> <p>Hosting trainers/travel (e.g., Fanshawe Colledge), webinars, a speaker series.</p> <p>Software licences/training modules (e.g., LinkedIn Learning = \$30/month/user) for hands-on learning.</p> <p>Consult with partners and seek partnerships (e.g., Centre for Employment and Learning, South Huron High School/AMDSB, Fanshawe).</p>
2.	Youth Volunteers of the Year recognition program	\$500	Reward youth contributions to the community while incentivizing additional participation.
3.	Dedicated space to youth in design of new multi-use recreation facility	TBD	A safe, inclusive space dedicated to problem solving, community building and youth initiatives.
4.	Local employer marketing campaign targeting youth	\$5,500	<p>Creation of short videos featuring employers.</p> <p>Familiarization tours.</p> <p>Seek partnership with Huron County Economic Development Department.</p>
TOTAL		\$11,000	

Legal Impact:

None.

Staffing Impact:

None.

Policies/Legislation:

None.

Consultation:

- Vanessa Culbert, Youth Engagement Strategist

Related Documents:

- South Huron Youth Engagement Strategy

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Currie, Manager of Community Services