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Genevieve Scharback

From: Grand Bend & Area Chamber of Commerce <info@grandbendtourism.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 06, 2017 2:16 PM
To: Genevieve Scharback
Subject: Fwd: LOCAL TRANSIT / SHUTTLE SERVICE - Information Meeting

Hi Genevieve

The Grand Bend & Area Chamber of Commerce is organizing an information meeting with local business groups throughout the area regarding the opportunity to develop a local transit system for this area. To this end, we sent out the email below.

We would like you to pass this along to Council with an open invitation to ALL COUNCILLORS to join us for this meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact Glen Baillie at gbaillie@hay.net or call 519-238-2001.

Regards,

Susan Mills, Manager
Grand Bend & Area Chamber of Commerce
1-81 Crescent Street
PO Box 248
Grand Bend, ON N0M 1T0
www.grandbendtourism.com / www.grandbendchamber.ca

www.facebook.com/grandbendtourism

twitter.com/Grand_bend

519-238-2001

Welcome Centre Hours: September to May, Monday to Friday, Noon to 4pm / June to August Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm / Sunday 10am-5pm



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Grand Bend & Area Chamber of Commerce <info@grandbendtourism.com>
Date: Thu, Jul 6, 2017 at 2:09 PM
Subject: LOCAL TRANSIT / SHUTTLE SERVICE - Information Meeting
To: Grand Bend & Area Chamber of Commerce <info@grandbendtourism.com>

Attention:

Grand Bend & Area Chamber of Commerce Members
South Huron Chamber *(please forward to your members)*
Zurich Chamber *(please forward to your members)*
Bayfield Chamber *(please forward to your members)*
Forest BIA *(please forward to your members)*
Exeter BIA *(please forward to your members)*
Grand Bend Community Foundation
Forest Community Foundation
South Huron Community Foundation

This email will be forwarded to the Clerks of all four local municipalities for their respective councils and to all local media outlets.

PLEASE FEEL FREE to pass this email along to whomever you think would be interested.

TRANSIT / SHUTTLE SERVICE for Lambton Shores, Bluewater, South Huron & North Middlesex

Over the last several years at various economic development meetings, the availability of local public transit has been cited as the NUMBER ONE tactic that could positively contribute to local economic health and prosperity.

WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY to duplicate and tailor a very successful shuttle service / transit system from Norfolk County (actually a first-tier level of government) to this area. Norfolk County worked with local economic development offices, tourism marketing organizations, local business partners and accessed the province's gas tax to start, establish and maintain a year-round public transit system with an additional summer shuttle to area attractions.

GETTING TRANSIT HERE

We have been shown by **Norfolk County** how a rural transit system can be successful. We need to enumerate how a local public transit system is a good idea for businesses, employers, employees, residents, tourists and ultimately the sustainability of our communities.

According to www.publictransportation.org, transit systems:

- Ease traffic congestion,
- Connect people with jobs and opportunities,
- Creates jobs,
- Revitalizes business districts and neighbourhoods,
- Enables employers to tap a larger workforce,
- Saves money on infrastructure costs for taxpayers and
- Reduces commuting costs.

How might your business be improved with access to a larger pool of potential employees? How might traffic along highway 21 corridor be improved? How might the issue of limited parking be reduced because residents and area visitors can use a bus to get around? How might campers and residents be more able to visit a restaurant and enjoy a drink with dinner? How might shopping local be increased because residents can now make it to neighbouring towns?

FIRST STEP: FEASIBILITY STUDY

Grant funding is available to pay for a feasibility study to analyze and evaluate a local transit system's operating parameters and costs. We need to demonstrate our collective business support for a public transit system.

WE ENVISION a community looped transit system connecting Forest, Arkona, Parkhill, Exeter, Hensall, Zurich, Bayfield, St. Joseph, Grand Bend, Pinery Park, Port Franks, Thedford, Ipperwash and Kettle & Stony Point FN. Possibly, a connection with Goderich too.

How you can get involved and help.....

1. ATTEND A MEETING - WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9

We're hosting an information meeting WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9 at 2:30pm at the LEGION in GRAND BEND. (Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/MW93WWBQHjM2>)

Brad Smith, Public Transportation Coordinator for RIDE NORFOLK / SOUTH COAST SHUTTLE will provide a presentation on how Norfolk County got their system started, their costs and how its been successful for them. Brad's presentation is concise and informative. Get the facts directly from the person who made it happen! (Reference: www.ridenorfolk.ca)

2. WRITE A LETTER OF SUPPORT

Submit a letter of support to us before, at or after the meeting, directly expressing your support of a local year-round transit system and supplemental summer shuttle. In your letter, demonstrate your support by including any/all of the following that you'd be willing to do and how a transit system could benefit your business:

- include a statement about your willingness to sponsor a bus stop or financially contribute sponsorship dollars
- include a statement that you would be interested in buying bus fares for your employees
- include a statement that you would be interested in advertising at the bus stops / on the bus
- include a statement about how you think a transit system would directly benefit your business operation (employees, reduced need for parking, additional customers, increased product/services sell etc)
- include any statement of a personal nature particular to you, your family or friends that you believe would support the need for a transit system

Mail it or Scan & Email it to us.

3. TELL YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLOR

Email / Snailmail / Phone your Municipal Councillor to let them know how this would help your business and that the ONLY way to access the Provincial Gas Tax is for the municipality to get on-board.

Currently, no local municipality is accessing this

A crucial element in this plan is the involvement of our local municipalities! They are the ones who have access to **\$321-million in Ontario Gas Tax money**. Municipalities access gas tax funding if they contribute financially to public transit services. They can use gas tax funds for local public transit priorities, such as making major infrastructure upgrades, buying additional transit vehicles, adding more routes, extending hours of service, implementing fare strategies and improving accessibility. T (See <https://news.ontario.ca/mto/en/2017/01/enhanced-gas-tax-program.html>)

Got Questions? Call or email Glen Baillie at gbaille@hay.net / 519-238-1472.

Regards,

Susan Mills, Manager
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