



THE CORPORATION OF HALDIMAND COUNTY
Business Development and
Planning Advisory Committee

Date: December 1, 2025
Time: 9:00 A.M.
Location: Haldimand County Administration Building - Haldimand Room
53 Thorburn Street South, Cayuga

Pages

- A. Call to Order**
- B. Land Acknowledgement**
- C. Disclosures of Conflict of Interest**
- D. Approval of Previous Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee Minutes**
 - 1. Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee Minutes - September 22, 2025
- E. Items for Consideration**
 - 1. Council Update
 - 2. Chair and Vice Chair Report
 - 3. 2026 Meeting Schedule
 - 4. 2025 BDAPAC Council Presentation
 - 5. Tourism and Attraction
 - 6. BDAPAC Budget and 2025 Workplan
 - 7. 2026 Workplan
 - 8. Economic Development & Tourism Update

F. New Business

1. Upcoming Meeting

G. Adjournment



THE CORPORATION OF HALDIMAND COUNTY

Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: September 22, 2025
Time: 9:00 A.M.
Location: Haldimand County Administration Building - Haldimand Room
 53 Thorburn Street South, Cayuga

Members Present

- P. Makey, Member
- T. Caputo, Member
- S. Bentley, Mayor
- G. Naylor, Member
- P. O'Neill, Councillor
- M. Reynolds, Member
- K. Zantingh, Member

Regrets

- P. Hauser, Member
- K. Hoover, Member
- A. Peet, Member

Staff Present

- M. Evers, General Manager, Development Services
- J. Nelson, Project Manager, Business Retention and Expansion
- L. Romanuk, Manager, Economic Development & Tourism
- C. Donaldson, Administrative Assistant

A. Call to Order

Chair P. Makey called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Welcomed new BDAPAC member Ken Zantingh, Owner & General Manager of Armstrong Milling and noted the addition of Ken Hoover of The Social Coffeehouse & Market.

B. Land Acknowledgement

Chair P. Makey read the Land Acknowledgement statement.

C. Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

None disclosed.

D. Approval of Previous Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee Minutes

1. Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee Minutes - June 2, 2025

Moved By: G. Naylor, Member

Seconded By: T. Caputo, Member

THAT the minutes of the Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee dated June 2, 2025 be approved as presented.

APPROVED

E. Items for Consideration

1. Council Update

Mayor Bentley provided Council updates, highlights included:

- Attended many summer festivals and events including Two Row on the Grand 10th anniversary event;
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO); members of Council and staff participated in various sessions and delegations with Provincial Ministries.
- Special Council meeting taking place this afternoon regarding CAO recruitment, Integrity Commissioner's report, and a motion to support the Municipality of Tweed regarding garbage disposal and energy production from garbage incineration.

2. Chair and Vice Chair Report

Vice Chair G. Naylor noted the recent article about the Physician Recruitment program's progress.

Chair P. Makey stressed the importance of attendance at meetings, including a request that members RSVP with their attendance to future meetings.

3. Tourism & Attraction

J. Nelson shared an overview of the materials created for the Tourism & Downtown Investment Attraction project.

Highlights included:

- Overview of project phases;
 - o Phase 1: Research and development of collateral - underway;

- Phase 2: Getting out and telling the story – planned to move forward into 2026;
- Marketing Collateral:
 - Sector profiles;
 - Templates Social and Banner Ads; and
 - Pitch Deck containing all of the sectors and key data.

Discussion ensued regarding communication approaches, content (data trends, lease rates, development costs and commercial taxes), distribution of materials, and niche advertisement opportunities.

4. BDAPAC Budget & 2025 Workplan

J. Nelson shared the following BDAPAC Budget and 2025 Workplan updates, which included:

- Tourism & Downtown Investment Attraction
- Smart Summit Professional Development
- Spring Job Fair
- Data Dashboard
- Summer Company Sponsorship

M. Reynolds joined the meeting at 9:50am

M. Evers shared an update on Physician Recruitment.

Highlights included:

- Report brought to Council in August capturing program after 1 year of project launch;
- Two full-time family physicians have been hired in the first year (one in Dunnville and one in Caledonia);
- Two locum physicians were hired to cover for full-time doctors taking a leave; and
- The committee's contribution of \$10,000 is soon to be utilized for Physician Recruitment outreach & familiarization Initiatives, including honorariums, networking opportunities, and community familiarization events.

Discussion ensued.

L. Romanuk shared an update on the Regional Marketing budget item noting that staff are working with the Missisaugas of the Credit First Nation and other neighbouring communities, however it's anticipated that the spend will not be utilized in 2025.

P. Makey proposed that the \$5,000 be used towards the Tourism and Downtown Investment Attraction project. Staff indicated they will evaluate capacity, and explore options.

Recommendation 2

Moved By: S. Bentley, Mayor

Seconded By: T. Caputo, Member

To reassign the 2025 Regional Marketing budget of \$5,000 to support Phase 2 of the Tourism and Downtown Investment Attraction.

APPROVED

J. Nelson provided an overview of other anticipated 2025 Advisory Projects:

- EDT Strategy; postponed due to the quickly changing economic landscape
- CIP Review; in progress, anticipated to be brought forward to the committee in 2026
- Business Retention and Expansion; refocused on tariff impacts in 2025
- North Caledonia Employment Lands; Phase 3 complete (report was approved by Council in June)

5. Robert Bell Intelligent Community Course and Summit

G. Naylor shared the following insights:

- “Death of distance”: social media/internet has made distance irrelevant/unimportant;
- Importance of broadband internet; and
- Collaboration with post-secondary institutions (such as Mohawk College) and local business to better match local job demand/needs.

G. Naylor also noted that he attended an all day seminar on March 6th provided by the Robert Bell Intelligent Community Forum; highlights included:

- Streamlining and permitting zoning issues;
- Develop an optimistic thinking culture in new industries; and
- Low-cost entrepreneurship start-ups and partnerships.

P. Makey added:

- Importance of forward thinking with technology, for example using drones in agriculture;
- Strategic private-public partnerships should continue to be explored to grow key sectors; and

- Opportunities within the tech sector for both high paying jobs and economic impact within the community.

Discussion ensued.

6. 2026 Workplan

L. Romanuk shared tentative 2026 Divisional partnerships and funding applications:

- Trade impacted communities program: joint funding application with Norfolk County in progress, focusing on investment attraction;
- Western Ontario Wardens Caucus supply chain mapping;
- Regional Economic Development Alliance continues to explore joint marketing opportunities for 2026;
- Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie is planning to submit a Trade impacted communities program application with a focus of training small businesses in Artificial Intelligence (AI); and
- Tourism Sprint Fund, noting an expression of interest was submitted to the program for a project focused on river access points.

L. Romanuk provided an update on 2026 EDT workplan items:

- Continuation of tariff response plan & roundtables;
- Business retention expansion and business visitation;
- Comprehensive signage strategy implementation;
- Review of the Community Improvement Plan program guidelines;
- Continuation of entrepreneurship ecosystem;
- Business incubator research;
- North Caledonia Employment Lands;
- Renewable energy request for proposals (RFPs);
- Continued Visitor Experience Strategy Implementation;
- Technology submission requests (tourism itinerary builder, invest Haldimand microsite, and online site selector tool); and
- Private events on public property; creation of policy.

7. Economic Development & Tourism Update

J. Nelson provided the following highlights:

- Tariff roundtable session; attendance was mostly manufacturing businesses and one agricultural business;

- G. Wright (Ministry of Economic Development Job Creation and Trade) facilitated the session and international business trade attorney, J. Yormick was a guest speaker;
- Entrepreneurship events taking place this fall (three meet-ups are being planned, with dates to be announced shortly in October and November);
- Small Business Breakfast taking place on October 23rd at the Jarvis Community Centre with key note speakers, Lisa and Howie Nigh, Owners of Nigh's Concrete;
- Intake for the Haldimand Wish Book is open with a deadline of October 15th (digital distribution only); and
- Tourism Network Familiarization Tour in Norfolk County taking place on October 1st organized by Haldimand County Economic Development and Tourism and Regional Tourism Organization 1 (Ontario's Southwest).

F. New Business

1. Discussion/engagement at meetings

P. Makey shared that attendance at BDAPAC is important, and that the committee is looking for feedback related to the value of the agenda to encourage participation.

Discussion ensued.

2. Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAF) representative

J. Nelson noted that she received an inquiry from OMAFA regarding an interest in sitting on the committee as there is not currently provincial representation. She noted that support from N. Kinkel (OMAF advisor) on certain meeting items may be beneficial.

The committee decided that a representative can attend the BDAPAC meetings as a public member, or as part of the agenda to contribute to subject matter as needed.

P. Makey brought forward an idea regarding localized procurement in the bid process.

M. Evers responded that staff would bring this inquiry forward to legal and support services to provide information back to the committee regarding procurement policies and frameworks that govern how bids can be awarded.

J. Nelson added, there are limitations under provincial Discriminatory Business practices Act (and others), which ensures that businesses cannot be chosen based on geographical location and other factors.

Discussion ensued.

G. Adjournment

Moved By: T. Caputo, Member

Seconded By: G. Naylor, Member

THAT this meeting is now adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

APPROVED