

CEDC 14.6

STAFF REPORT: Communications and Economic Development

REPORT TO:	Committee of the Whole
MEETING DATE:	December 8, 2014
REPORT NO.:	CEDC.14.6
SUBJECT:	Fish Ladder Experience Enhancements
 PREPARED BY:	 Elizabeth Cornish, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator

A. Recommendations

That Council receive Staff Report CEDC.14.6 “Fish Ladder Experience Enhancements” for information purposes.

B. Background

The Town is pursuing grant funding to allow it to enhance the visitor experience at and around the Thornbury Fish ladder, drawing visitors throughout the community to experience other attractions and visit local business.

The Thornbury Fish ladder continues to attract visitors including both “viewers” and fishing enthusiasts. Most weekends the bridge over the Beaver River is packed with tourists leaning over the railings to view the fish making their way up the ladder.

Shawn Everitt, Director of Community Services, has been working with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to take down some of the unnecessary gating and fencing, as well as perform basic improvements to the property to make it more “visitor-friendly”.

Shawn is also working with the Municipal Art Program Committee to investigate the creation of innovative interpretive signage for the site to add even more value for visitors to the Fish Ladder.

With these enhancements at the planning stages, it make sense to consider providing a more robust tourism experience built around the Thornbury Fish Ladder to draw visitors around the Town to various shops, restaurants and attractions. Obvious extensions of the Fish Ladder ‘experience” would be a visit to Kolapore Springs, a walk along the Beaver River featuring the trestle bridge and harbour or involving local restaurants in creating signature dishes using local fish.

This project is not meant to be competition for the Apple Pie Trail and is not expected to be of the same magnitude. This will be a more modest extension of the Fish Ladder itself.

Economic Development is contributing \$5,000 from the 2014 Economic Development budget that will be paired with \$5,000 as approved by the BIA. Together, this \$10,000 meets the minimum requirement to apply for RTO7 funding and if successful, will attract \$20,000 in RTO7 partner funding. This will give us a total of \$30,000 to hire a consultant to work with the business community to develop the “Fish Ladder” experience and create informational and marketing materials.

The application deadline is December 8th at midnight. We have been advised that the funding rules (i.e. what is allowable) could change for 2015, so we have been encouraged by RTO7 to get our application in this year. We will be submitting our application by that deadline.

The Economic Development Advisory Committee also supports the submission of this proposal as indicated at the December 1st, 2014 Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting.

C. The Blue Mountains’ Strategic Plan

6.6 Implement processes for continuous improvement

D. Environmental Impacts

None.

E. Financial Impact

\$5,000 from the 2014 Economic Development Budget

F. In Consultation With

Troy Speck, Chief Administrative Officer

G. Attached

Respectfully submitted,

Signature

Troy Speck, CAO

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