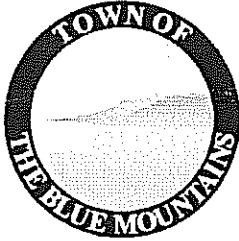


D.7

STAFF REPORT: Administration



REPORT TO: Council  
MEETING DATE: July 14, 2008  
REPORT NO.: CEDC.08.12  
SUBJECT: Community Exchange Program Team

PREPARED BY: Lisa Kidd, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator

#### A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report, CEDC.08.12, "Community Exchange Program Team"; and

THAT Council appoint one member of Council, \_\_\_\_\_ to be part of the Community Exchange Program Team.

#### B. Background

On April 14, 2008, Council adopted recommendations to (i) authorize participation in the Community Exchange Program and to (ii) endorse a partnership with the Town of Gravenhurst as the matching community for the program.

The Community Exchange Program consists of Volunteer "visiting teams" from The Blue Mountains and Gravenhurst doing unannounced, *incognito* visits, to record their observations, and give constructive feedback to their exchange community. The knowledge gained through a First Impressions Community Exchange can be the basis for positive community action, focused on downtown revitalization, tourism development, investment attraction, quality service improvement or broader community strategic planning efforts.

The Blue Mountains team will consist of 5 community residents from a range of different backgrounds, occupations and ages. Staff is requesting one member of Council to participate as well, bringing the total number of team members to 6.

The commitment involves:

- One two-hour training session with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture; Food and Rural Affairs, in The Blue Mountains;
- One one-day visit to Gravenhurst in early September; and
- One follow-up visit to Gravenhurst to report our findings.

Team members will:

- Visit Gravenhurst as part of a Team;
- Complete a community assessment Questionnaire during the visit to Gravenhurst;
- Help write a report summarizing our observations of Gravenhurst; and
- Help present findings to Gravenhurst, at a follow-up meeting in Gravenhurst.

Travel and Meals for the trip(s) to Gravenhurst will be covered in accordance with our Town policy.

### **C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan**

Strategic Action 1.4 Prepare an Economic Development Strategy

Strategic Action 3.3 Provide Appropriate policies and zoning to protect existing architecture and natural heritage features

### **D. Environmental Impacts**

Motor vehicle emissions will occur as a result of travel to Gravenhurst. This will have a minor negative impact on local air quality. Staff will encourage car-pooling to Gravenhurst to reduce emissions.

### **E. Budget Impact**

Travel/Mileage is estimated at \$250.00 and is included as part of the Communications and Economic Development Capital Budget for the Economic Development Strategy.

### **F. Attached**

None.

Respectfully submitted,



Signature