



# Staff Report

## Administration

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**Report To:** Economic Development Advisory Committee  
**Meeting Date:** October 28, 2019  
**Report Number:** FAF.19.218  
**Subject:** Economic Development Strategy Update (October 2019)  
**Prepared by:** Tim Hendry, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator & Jeremy Chan, Communications and Economic Development Project Specialist

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### A. Recommendations

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THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee receive Staff Report FAF.19.218, entitled “Economic Development Strategy Update (October 2019)” for information purposes.

AND THAT the Committee endorses the strategy timeline and phases as detailed within the staff report;

AND THAT the Committee endorses the public engagement plan as detailed within the staff report;

AND THAT the Committee endorses the project name “Vision 2020 - 2025 | The Blue Mountains Economic Development Strategy - Reaching our Peak”

AND THAT the Committee supports the recommendation from the sub-committee to allocate \$30,000 of the \$100,000 Economic Development Strategy Budget for the development of a Retail Gap Analysis for the entire Town of The Blue Mountains of which the results of the Retail Gap Analysis will be incorporated into the final Economic Development Strategy as action items.

### B. Overview

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The purpose of this staff report is to provide a status update regarding the Economic Development Strategy.

### C. Background

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To guide the development of the Economic Development Strategy, Staff have been working collaboratively with the Economic Development Sub Committee and with OMAFRA to develop the framework and foundation related to the development of the strategy. This report is being provided to the committee as a general project update.

## **D. Analysis**

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Staff have been working with OMAFRA and the Economic Development Sub-Committee on the development of the framework to facilitate the creation of the Economic Development Strategy. The following staff report contains information on the following key areas:

- Project Timeline and Phases
- Project Budget & Retail Gap Analysis
- Public Engagement Plan

### **Project Timeline and Phases**

The following timeline and project phases have been established to ensure the timely creation of the Economic Development Strategy.

**Please see Attachment 1- Economic Development Timeline and Phases**

Please note that although the timeline of November to February for Phase 2 is a significant duration of time, there are many essential steps within this phase that will ultimately contribute to the success of the project if given the time and attention that they require.

### **Project Name**

In consultation with the Economic Development Strategy Sub-Committee, the proposed name for the Economic Development Strategy will be “Vision 2020 - 2025 | The Blue Mountains Economic Development Strategy - Reaching our Peak ”

### **Public Engagement Plan**

Input from residents, local business leaders and the business community plays a fundamental role within the successful development of the Economic Development Strategy. To ensure engagement, staff are proposing a two-step approach to public engagement.

#### **1. General Public / Residents**

- The advertising campaign to promote the survey will follow the standard Town advertising process. Advertising will include a combination of the following: road signs, newspaper ads, radio ads, website postings, social media posts, mailed post cards, and outreach with local organizations and associations. The estimated cost of this advertising is \$5000.

#### **2. Local Business Leaders and Business Community**

- A separate survey will be created specifically to engage local business leaders and the business community across The Blue Mountains. Town staff will work to build a list / database of businesses operating within the Town boundaries. Businesses will be invited to complete the survey and if interested they will also be invited to attend a facilitated discussion on economic development.

## Project Budget

\$100,000 was approved by Council in the 2019 Budget for the creation of the Economic Development Strategy. The following chart provides a breakdown of the remaining funds to date:

Budget Items	Expense
<b>Beginning Budget</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Staff Salary</b>	\$38,353
<b>Strategy Development</b> Graphic Design, Layout and Printing Survey Advertising Workshop Expense Facilitator Expense	\$25,000
<b>Remaining Budget Available</b>	<b>\$36,647</b>

## Retail Gap Analysis

The purpose of the Retail Gap Analysis is to report on the Town of The Blue Mountains future retail opportunities and more specifically to highlight and address the potential gaps, issues and or barriers within retail categories. The goal is to identify areas of opportunity to limit or mitigate retail spending leakage due to low supply and/or product and service availability within the Town. The Retail Gap Analysis will also provide direction for a high-level retail development strategy, with recommendations on retail formats, locations, and potential retailers that would fit the local market.

The recommendation from the sub-committee to proceed with the Retail Gap Analysis does fit within the available budget and scope of the use of the budget as the results of the analysis will be incorporated into the final Economic Development Strategy as action items.

### E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

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Goal #1: Create Opportunities for Sustainability

Objective #1 Retain Existing Business

Objective #2 Attract New Business

Objective #3 Promote a Diversified Economy

Goal #2: Engage Our Communities & Partners

Objective #3 Strengthen Partnerships

Goal #3: Support Healthy Lifestyles

Objective #3 Manager Growth and Promote Smart Growth

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## **F. Environmental Impacts**

No environmental impacts are anticipated within the scope of this report.

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## **G. Financial Impact**

The funds to develop the Economic Development Strategy were approved within the 2019 Budget.

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## **H. In consultation with**

Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

Peter Bordignon, Chair of EDAC / Member of Council

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## **I. Public Engagement**

The topic of this Staff Report has not been subject to a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Tim Hendry, [economicdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:economicdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca).

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## **J. Attached**

Attachment 1- Economic Development Timeline and Phases

Respectfully Submitted,

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Tim Hendry  
Communications and Economic Development Coordinator

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Shawn Everitt  
Chief Administrative Officer

For more information, please contact:  
Tim Hendry, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator  
[economicdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:economicdevelopment@thebluemountains.ca)  
519-599-3131 extension 282