



**THE CORPORATION OF THE  
TOWN OF GEORGINA**

**GEORGINA** Georgina Economic Development Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: Monday, April 8, 2024  
Time: 7:00 PM

Members Present: Margaret Quirk, Mayor  
Dan Fellini, Councillor, Ward 2  
Dave Neeson  
Charles Calzavara  
Stephanie Robinson  
Anna Buchner  
Bob Law  
Amanda Mallory  
Christine Burton

Members Absent: Jason Solilo

Staff Present: Karyn Stone, Manager of Economic Development  
Katrina Ellis, Marketing & Promotions Coordinator  
Wendy Cuthbert, Administrative Coordinator, Strategic Initiatives

Others Present Stephanie Simpson  
Nagin Khorasani

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

“The Town of Georgina recognizes and acknowledges that we are on lands originally used and occupied by the First Peoples of the Williams Treaties First Nations and other Indigenous Peoples, and on behalf of the Mayor and Council, we would like to thank them for sharing this land. We would also like to acknowledge the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation as our close neighbour and friend, one with which we strive to build a cooperative and respectful relationship.

We also recognize the unique relationship the Chippewas have with the lands and waters of this territory. They are the water protectors and environmental stewards of these lands and we join them in these responsibilities.”

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm

**2. ROLL CALL**

As noted above

- 3. **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 4. **INTRODUCTION OF ADDENDUM ITEM(S)**
- 5. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**GEDC2024-0009**

Moved By Christine Burton  
Seconded By Bob Law

**Carried**

- 6. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND GENERAL NATURE THEREOF**
- 7. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**GEDC2024-0010**

Moved By Charles Calzavara  
Seconded By Stephanie Robinson

**Carried**

- 8. **DELEGATIONS/ SPEAKERS**
- 9. **PRESENTATIONS**
- 10. **REPORTS**

1. Economic Development Updates

- Karyn Stone presented the division's PowerPoint -- Economic Development and Tourism Updates, April 2024 -- noting that the five-year Economic Development and Tourism Strategy was approved by Council on Feb. 28. Staff have already commenced with implementation and will be presenting progress updates annually to Council. Ms. Stone will provide monthly updates to the GEDC.
- The strategy recommended more than 40 actions based on the four pillars of: Investment Attraction, Business Expansion and Retention, Enhancing the Economic Impact of Tourism and the Creation of Lively Downtowns.

**Investment Attraction**

- Ms. Stone shared the details behind the hiring of a lead generation firm, which assisted the team with the creation of a slide deck that

can be used for marketing/promoting Georgina to investors, visitors, etc. Ms. Stone shared a selection of these slides with members and added that her team will also be meeting with the same firm in May to discuss a Lead Generation Program, which will connect the EcDev team with companies looking to expand/relocate in 2–5-year span.

- Ms. Stone also shared information around the Site Selectors Guild Conference she, along with Strategic Initiatives director Shawn Nastke, attended April 2-5 in Nashville. York Region was a Gold Sponsor at this conference, which boasted attendance from York Region, Ontario and Canadian municipalities.
- At the conference, Ms. Stone said the team met with site selectors (which assess site suitability for companies looking to locate or expand) from across North America and Europe. Lots of information gleaned from this group, including the trend of the reduced need for office space. Another critical takeaway was that it is important for York Region and the lower-tier municipalities to join forces when marketing their value proposition. Global investors are looking at regional scale and offerings.
- Katrina Ellis shared updates to Choose Georgina micro-site and news of a new campaign video focused on talent attraction.

### **Business Retention and Expansion**

- Ms. Stone outlined the Business Visitation Program and again invited members to share any information around issues or problems they come across in the community that might be rectified through this program.
- Negin Khorasani, who is taking on Stephanie Simpson's role at YSpace while she is on maternity leave, spoke on her professional background and updated the group on YSpace highlights, including the \$150,000 RED funding announcement (which extends the hub's offerings until 2026) and the conclusion to the Digital Skills for Business Workshop series

### **Tourism Development**

- Ms. Ellis provided an update on tourism development, including news around trade shows, Taste of Georgina and the Town's Wayfinding Strategy.
- She also outlined the status of the Economic, Culture and Community Betterment (ECCB) Grant, which garnered 15 applications on its first intake. The second intake is currently open (and closes May 31st.)

- She added that the team is now shifting away from winter activities into warmer weather efforts, including the development of its Spring/Summer Tourism Guide and working with local farmers on the Field to Table event.

### **Create Lively Downtowns**

- Ms. Stone provided updates to the Town's three business improvement areas (BIAs.) The Sutton BIA recently held its AGM and the approved budget will be presented to Council. She added that the team has applied to the Rural Economic Development Fund and the My Main Street program to better support the downtown areas, specifically the High Street reconstruction project that is being undertaken by York Region. The Sutton BIA also received a bursary to attend the Ontario BIA learning conference in April.
- She shared that the two other BIAs are currently working with staff on their plans for the balance of 2024. Two summer students will be joining the team again this year and Ms. Stone said one priority for the pair will be to address the digital divide discussed at the last meeting by helping local businesses recognize the importance of having a presence online (i.e., Google.)

### **Roundtable Discussion**

Ms. Stone requested that members return to the Roundtable questions after the other updates are provided. Chair Fellini agreed.

### **GEDC2024-0011**

Moved By Amanda Mallory

Seconded By Bob Law

### **Carried**

## 2. Verbal Update - Chamber of Commerce

- Christine Burton reported that March was a busy and successful month for the Chamber.
- She noted that the Chamber will be hosting the Discover Georgina show on April 20-21st and the Mayor's Lunch on May 14th.
- The Chamber will also be hosting an After-5 Event at Imagine Cinemas -- film TBD.
- Ms. Burton added that four committees have formed since the Chamber's AGM: covering Tourism, Networking & Events, Government Affairs & Advocacy, and Governance & Recruitment.

**GEDC2024-0012**

Moved By Stephanie Robinson  
Seconded By Margaret Quirk

**Carried**

3. Verbal Update - South Lake Community Futures
  - Ms. Stone advises committee that the South Lake Community Futures representative offered their regrets for tonight's meeting but will get an update from this organization for our next meeting.
  
4. Georgina YSpace Programming
  - Chair indicated that the YSpace update was provided in the PowerPoint presentation.
  - Ms. Simpson responded to a GEDC member's query around how to source information on Chamber events and networking in general by recommending that business owners subscribe to the EcDev newsletter and check the Calendar page on the Town's website for event information. She also mentions that non-members can attend many Chamber events but pay a non-member rate.

**GEDC2024-0013**

Moved By Anna Buchner  
Seconded By Christine Burton

**Carried**

**11. DISPOSITIONS/ PROCLAMATIONS, GENERAL INFORMATION ITEMS**

None.

1. General Information Items

**GEDC2024-0014**

Moved By Bob Law  
Seconded By Anna Buchner

2. Disposition Items

**12. MOTIONS/ NOTICES OF MOTION**

**13. OTHER BUSINESS**

1. May 6th Guest Speaker -- Ian Duff (McSweeney and Associates)
2. Roundtable Discussion

### **1. May 6th Guest Speaker**

- Ms. Stone advises that Ian Duff from McSweeney and Associates will be discussing the economic development trends in Georgina and beyond at the May 6th meeting.

### **2. Roundtable Discussion**

What sort of industry/business would you like to see in Georgina? What can the Town do to help retain businesses?

- Ms. Stone invites commentary/insights around what sectors seem to be lacking (or would be a good fit) in Georgina and what the town can do to help retain businesses.
- One member mentions the importance of local restaurants beyond fast food options. Another member agrees and wonders why there are so few options to enjoy the waterfront in Georgina (dining, shopping.) Further, the member adds, the town needs businesses that can pay a living wage so that people can live and work in Georgina.
- Another member says the focused-sector approach that the Town seems to be adopting with regards to the Life Sciences and Technology Park is a sound strategy as it develops a niche that will grow and create a domino effect for the area, boosting other sectors and long-term lakeshore plans, restaurants, etc.
- Mayor Quirk discusses the appeal of a satellite post-secondary educational campus in Georgina, positing that this would boost the chances of young residents being able to get well-paid employment in town.
- Another member commented on the reputation that the town once had around business growth wherein it was believed that locating or expanding a business in Georgina was so difficult due to red tape and requirements. Members agree that there needs to be a balance between economic growth and environmental stewardship because of the town's proximity to Lake Simcoe.
- Ms. Stone advised that Town Staff have been working hard over the past few years to improve the approvals process and recognized that many of the approvals required are from levels of government and agencies beyond the Town's control.

### **GEDC2024-0015**

Moved By Stephanie Robinson  
Seconded By Christine Burton

**Carried**

**14. CLOSED SESSION**

**15. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**GEDC2024-0016**

Moved By Christine Burton

Seconded By Anna Buchner

**Carried**

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Councillor Dan Fellini, Chair