



**THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWN OF GEORGINA**

GEORGINA Georgina Economic Development Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 10, 2024
Time: 7:00 PM

Members Present: Margaret Quirk, Mayor
Dan Fellini, Councillor, Ward 2 -- Chair
Dave Neeson, Councillor, Ward 3
Charles Calzavara
Anna Buchner
Bob Law
Amanda Mallory
Christine Burton

Members Absent: Jason Solilo
Stephanie Robinson

Staff Present: Karyn Stone, Manager of Economic Development
Cristina Liu, Economic and Tourism Recovery Program
Coordinator
Wendy Cuthbert, Administrative Coordinator, Strategic Initiatives

Guest: Caroline Yang – Loans Officer, South Lake Community
Futures

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 (time).

2. ROLL CALL

As noted above

3. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. INTRODUCTION OF ADDENDUM ITEM(S)

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

GEDC2024-0032

Moved By Christine Burton

Seconded By Margaret Quirk

Carried

6. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

GEDC2024-0033

Moved By Bob Law

Seconded By Christine Burton

Carried

8. DELEGATIONS/ SPEAKERS

9. PRESENTATIONS

Caroline Yang, Business Loan Officer, South Lake Futures, presented a PowerPoint: South Lake Futures -- Local Solutions for Local Companies.

The presentation outlines that the government-funded, not-for-profit agency provides the following business services to local small- and medium-sized businesses in rural and remote communities, including Georgina:

- one-on-one counselling
- business plan consults
- business plan development/guidance
- cash flow projection
- business registration
- business financing

The agency provides financial support through loans, ranging from \$1,000 - \$300,000 to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and non-profits. If the request is over \$300,000, South Lake will work with another lending facility to help arrange loans. South Lake provides loans by partnering with traditional financial institutions.

South Lake Futures focuses on four sectors: manufacturing, agri-food, trades and food processing. Ms. Yang also noted that consideration will be given to lending to businesses that operate in other sectors – but specializes in these areas.

Ms. Yang highlighted some recent South Lake Futures projects to spread the word about its offerings, including hosting several bus tours to clients who have been supported by South Lake Futures (two businesses on the tour were in Georgina) that introduced board members and officials to local business owners. South Lake also worked with YSpace and the Georgina Chamber of Commerce to host several small business workshops during Small Business Week.

South Lake Futures is trying to develop a new loan program that would support local businesses with a variety of business expenses including trade show registrations, renovations, etc. Ms. Yang invited the GEDC members to pass on any knowledge they may like to share when it comes to the support needed by local business.

After the presentation, Ms. Stone thanked Caroline for the work that South Lake Futures does to support businesses and shared a couple of anecdotes around local businesses that have been propelled forward because of South Lake Futures.

Meanwhile, Mayor Quirk mentioned that the agricultural sector was discussed thoroughly at the latest York Region Committee of the Whole meeting, held that morning. The Mayor shares that the region's Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee introduced its *Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Report*, a report that illustrates the importance of this sector for the region. The Mayor suggested that the GEDC invite someone from this regional committee to present at a future meeting.

GEDC2024-0034

Moved By Christine Burton

Seconded By Margaret Quirk

Carried

10. REPORTS

1. Economic Development Updates

Karyn Stone presented the division's October updates. Some highlights:

- Two additional tenants are planning to move into the Panattoni Building that has recently been constructed in the Keswick Business Park (these tenants are currently working through the building permit process)
- Council approved zoning for the Life Sciences and Technology Park, which is an important milestone as it means that the Developers can commence with recruiting prospective tenants, and additional investment to the site.
- The team is participating at this year's MedTech Conference, within a shared York Region/Toronto Global booth, next week in Toronto.
- The Georgina talent attraction video (embedded in the presentation slide for members to view) has earned over 90K visits since its launch in August.
- The division has tracked over 70 formal business visitations since the program started several months ago.
- YSpace programming still going strong; working with York Region staff and partners to develop a long-term sustainability plan and a business model that continues to adapt to the needs of the East Gwillimbury and Georgina audiences.
- Small Business Week (Oct. 21-25) schedule is very full this year, with several planned workshops and a Thursday conference by the Chamber of Commerce

Cristina Liu shared tourism updates, including:

- The team is working with the Communications division on a new tourism microsite, aiming to launch in spring 2025
- Town Staff are working on collaborations with tourism agencies -- Central Counties Tourism and Destination Ontario -- to promote Georgina to visitors and highlight tourism assets.
- The installation of six new marquees at priority locations across Georgina, which feature a new design element wherein the marquees are placed next to park improvements, like benches and bike racks. Future plans include adding bike repair stations to the areas to cater to the town's robust cycling tourists.
- The division organized the 7th annual Field to Table this summer, with something new: incorporating art (live music, painting, etc.) into the event. Participating locations reported an average of over 500 visitors, with close to 30% being classified as tourists (travelling at least 40 kilometers to visit.) The division tied the

town's recent recognition as a Bee City (one of many towns/cities across Canada that aim to improve the outcome of native pollinator species) to one of the event prizes.

- Georgina has been chosen to host an upcoming Economic Development Council of Ontario (EDCO) regional event. The full-day event will be held in the spring of 2025.
- With the help of Central Counties Tourism, the division is working on collecting and assessing data from the 22 festivals and events it supported this year to better understand visitor demographics, behaviours and needs moving forward.

Karyn Stone reviewed some of the division's downtown revitalization efforts and indicated that the team member responsible for this portfolio, Julie Cain, will be providing a more fulsome update at the next meeting. Some notes:

- Some initial Jackson's Point Parkette enhancements were completed in September (vegetation removal and trimming to improve site lines)
- A presentation by the Town's Operations and Infrastructure director concerning the timeline of High Street construction was provided to the Sutton BIA
- Council received a report on restaurant patios located on public road allowances/sidewalk areas; a draft policy is to be provided to Council (with input by the Clerks division) in Q1 2025.

The roundtable discussion delved into tourism, providing insight for the further development of Georgina's tourism microsite.

- Committee members discussed Georgina's tourism brand -- the lake is an obvious hook but it's equally important to highlight the main street areas and surrounding scenic farms/forests -- and how it compares/contrasts with other municipalities for day and overnight trips.
- One point that raised is that some of the attractiveness of Georgina is that we are "a community of communities" and this presents a branding opportunity, wherein a road trip could encompass the small main street areas within Georgina, with short scenic drives between each.

- Another member mentioned how useful it would be to provide travel packages -- events/attractions tied with hotel stays -- to visitors to cultivate more tourism in Georgina.
- Committee members are invited to share any thoughts about this topic via email.

2. Verbal Update - Chamber of Commerce

Christine Burton provided a verbal update for Georgina Chamber of Commerce, including:

- Chamber had a busy summer with its tourism kiosk open five days a week at De La Salle and Link office open for 21 weeks for Farmer's Market
- The Chamber is working on the 2025 Grant Application for Non-Profits, due next week
- It is also working with the Economic Development division to streamline provisions – and create new ones – to ensure that the Chamber and Town collaborate again next year.
- The Chamber is hosting the Small Business Conference as part of Small Business Week, to be held on Thursday, Oct. 24
- In mid-October, Chamber Exec. Dir. (and Chamber Ontario representative) Jennifer Anderson will attend Chamber of Commerce Executives of Canada professional development conference (followed by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's AGM) in Halifax.

GEDC2024-0035

Moved By Charles Calzavara
Seconded By Bob Law

Carried

11. DISPOSITIONS/ PROCLAMATIONS, GENERAL INFORMATION ITEMS

1. General Information Items

- Georgina Matters -- Fall Edition
- Small Business Week

Karyn Stone shared the fall issue of *Georgina Matters*, a quarterly newsletter published by the Town that is direct mailed to every resident in Georgina (and also available at various facilities) with members, so they are aware of this communications effort to keep residents and business owners informed about Town matters.

Further, the Small Business Week flyer – to outline events during Small Business Week -- was shared with the committee.

GEDC2024-0036

Moved By Margaret Quirk

Seconded By Christine Burton

Carried

2. Disposition Items

12. MOTIONS/ NOTICES OF MOTION

13. OTHER BUSINESS

14. CLOSED SESSION

15. MOTION TO ADJOURN

GEDC2024-0037

Moved By Amanda Mallory

Seconded By Christine Burton

Carried

Councillor Dan Fellini, Chair