



**COUNTY OF PERTH**

Office of the CAO

Economic Development and Tourism Division

**2022 Business Plan**

December 2021

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## **Business Plan 2021**

### **Economic Development and Tourism**

Questions should be forwarded to the Manager of Economic Development and Tourism.

#### **Preamble**

The impact of COVID-19 on the Economic Development and Tourism division in 2020 was felt immediately and persisted throughout 2021. Businesses and tourism operators will be looking to the division to continue to provide resources, direct support where possible and innovative promotional and shop local campaigns that support them along the road to recovery.

The actions outlined in the 2022 business plan consist of a continuation of the work that the division has been involved in historically as well as some new initiatives, and re-imagined initiatives as we move along the road to recovery. This business plan outlines the key activities and initiatives that are planned for 2022.

#### **Overview of the Service**

The role of the Economic Development and Tourism Division is to facilitate and implement regional economic development and tourism strategies as a means of promoting the County as an attractive business location and place to live and visit. This is achieved by developing and delivering programs and policies that support, increase and strengthen the business communities of Perth County. We achieve this by engaging and working with our member municipalities, businesses, business organizations, community organizations, provincial and federal government partners, investors and associations. A collaborative approach is taken to ensure timely delivery of projects that will promote Perth County business development and stabilization.

The Economic Development and Tourism Division strives to provide exceptional service by participating as a key partner in regional initiatives, serving as a resource to Perth County's member communities and ensuring responsive action to inquiries and challenges facing business. This is achieved by ensuring a high level of professionalism, a proactive approach to dealing with challenges and ensuring high level of expertise and industry knowledge, as well as fostering partnerships and building relationships within and beyond Perth County. Collectively, we will continue to market Perth County as a sought-after destination to visitors, locals and investors.

Economic Development and Tourism Division activities include initiatives aimed at retaining existing businesses and creating a business environment that will enable local businesses to expand and prosper. These activities include business recruitment, investment attraction, strategic alliances and partnerships, entrepreneurship, quality of life, workforce development, downtown revitalization, tourism development, input into the updating of the official municipal plan to increase capacity for growth and improvement of municipal infrastructure, etc. These factors combine to position a community for growth and long-term economic sustainability. Support for business has never been more evident than during the COVID -19 pandemic. As businesses struggled with unprecedented shutdowns, partial closures and ever evolving health guidelines, the Economic Development and Tourism Division has been there to help ensure that they are supported, have access to the most up to date information and provide a local boost to morale.

Tourism initiatives will continue to promote Perth County as a destination area, promoting and strengthening the local economy, towns and community events. Through new strategic marketing initiatives and destination development programming, , Tourism will continue to elevate the profile of the region's tourism offerings with the goal to increase visitor spending and lengthen visitor overnight stays. Strategic marketing of our region's tourism amenities to visitors and residents helps to create jobs, stimulate supply-chain spending, and enable business owners to prosper.

The Economic Development and Tourism Division also includes transportation. In 2020, the team developed and implemented an intercommunity public transportation service that improves mobility options for individuals who face transportation barriers, such as seniors, persons with disabilities, youth, and persons living on low income. Transportation continues to be a key factor in the ability of residents to access medical services, to reach jobs, education and training, to participate in the community, and, in general, to achieve a quality of life. Managing the PC Connect transportation service includes overseeing day-to-day operations, providing education and customer support, creatively promoting and building ridership, and implementing continuous service enhancements. While conveniently connecting residents to points of interest throughout the County and surrounding areas, PC Connect is contributing to both the economic and tourism success in the County by offering affordable, accessibly transportation throughout the county for both residents and visitors.

*\*\*\* Currently under the Office of the CAO to assist with strategic initiatives and communications, returning to the Economic Development and Tourism portfolio January 2023\*\*\**

*Corporate Communications are vital to maintaining the integrity of the Perth County brand, while striving for clear, consistent and unified messaging among all Perth County departments and representatives. Our communication strategy ensures that the public perception of Perth County staff, politicians and functions will be positively maintained at*

*all times. A good communications strategy is essential for any municipality to get important information out to its residents. In addition, understanding what communication channels and tools are available to a municipality, and which are used by community members, is essential. Perth County staff maintains several social media platforms, website, public facing emails and media lists to ensure that corporate information are deployed in timely and professional manner to the appropriate audiences.*

## **Key Customers**

- County Council/Member Municipalities, staff and elected officials
- County Businesses and Industry/Taxpayers/Entrepreneurs
- Business Investors /Residents and Visitors
- Business Associations, BIAs and Chambers of Commerce
- Municipal Staff (Communications planning, training and coaching)
- Sector Associations (Federation of Agriculture, etc.)
- Other Economic Development based organizations
- Provincial Ministries
- Federal Departments

## **Core Businesses/Services**

- Respond to business start-up and investment inquiries
- Promote the County as a favourable region to invest, live, work in and visit for people of all backgrounds
- Implement and maintain an effective Business Retention and Expansion program
- Implement Workforce Development Projects addressing our labour shortage by recruiting and retaining youth and newcomers
- Provide economic development support to member Municipalities, Businesses, Business Associations, industry and community organizations
- Serve as resource and partner for local Business Improvement Associations and Chambers of Commerce
- Lead and facilitate economic development and tourism research projects to support business and community development
- Support the continued success of key economic sectors such as Agriculture and Manufacturing
- Execute regional marketing strategies
- Identify emerging trends, challenges and opportunities and design effective responses

- Establish meaningful contact with other levels of government, business community, education institutions and interest groups to develop and further economic initiatives and goals
- Pursue funding opportunities and manage administration of projects funded from grant programs
- Develop and maintain an accessible online presence including web and social media
- Conduct research to gather information and identify resources to assist businesses and entrepreneurs
- Fuel economic growth through targeted destination development and promotion
- Engage a diverse group of key stakeholders to ensure strategies are designed with community input
- Gather and analyze statistical data about the County needed to monitor socio-economic trends
- Work closely with other departments to consider economic impacts of County policies and programs
- Administration of annual divisional budget and work plans
- Facilitate training for Perth County business community and organizations
- Maintain the integrity of Perth County brand
- Maintain an inventory/directory of Perth County businesses
- Provide an affordable and accessible transportation service for Perth County residents
- *Develop and execute effective communications material, programs and policies (Moved to the office of the CAO until January 2023)*

### **Legislated Standards**

- Municipal Act, SO 2001
- Ontario Regulations
- County of Perth By-laws & Policies
- Municipal By-laws & Official Plans
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Development Charges Act
- Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, 2000, c.5
- Provincial Policy Statement, 2020
- County of Perth Official Plan
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, S.O.2020, c.17

<b>Core Programs</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Administration</b>	<b>Economic &amp; Business Analysis</b>
<b>Business Retention &amp; Expansion</b>	<b>Policy Development</b>	<b>Socio-economic statistical data analysis</b>
<b>Tourism Marketing &amp; Promotion</b>	<b>Divisional Budget</b>	<b>Business consultation and advising</b>
<b>Destination Development</b>	<b>Manage Contracted Staff</b>	<b>Problem Solving</b>
<b>Member Municipal Support</b>	<b>Grant Administration</b>	<b>Primary research</b>
<b>Transportation Services (PC Connect)</b>	<b>Grant Procurement</b>	<b>Performance monitoring of programs</b>
<b>Business &amp; Investment Attraction and support</b>	<b>Procurement of Services</b>	<b>Strategic Planning</b>
<b>Economic Development and Tourism Program Development</b>	<b>Interdepartmental Communication of Economic interests</b>	
<b>Corporate Communications</b>		
<b>PC Connect Transportation Services</b>		

<b>Communications &amp; Public Relations</b>
<b>Web and Social Media Presence</b>
<b>Stakeholder &amp; Community Engagement</b>
<b>Media Promotion</b>
<b>Support to BIAs, Chambers and Stakeholders</b>



## **Key Linkages with Strategic Plan**

Economic Development is a key focus of the County's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan. As such a number of goals and actions are directly linked to the County's Economic Development Division. Primarily Goals 1, 3 and 4 and their subsequent actions are directly tied to the delivery of economic development or have overlap with economic development programs and priorities. In addition, Economic Development interests extend into other aspects of the Corporation.

The Economic Development Program continues to grow as a result of strategic planning, research and action plans that have been developed to address issues facing businesses across Perth County: labour shortage issues, youth outmigration, lack of resources for newcomers, and workforce development to name a few. These issues have been identified in previous work on Business Retention and Expansion, the Labour Market Strategy and Perth4Youth Strategic Plan. As the business community has become more aware of the County and the profile of the County increases, in addition to ongoing implementation of core programs, there is a need for additional support.

### ***Goal 1: Growth & Economic Development***

Economic Development is a key goal identified in the strategic plan. All of the work that the division does is in support of Goal 1, Growth & Economic Development. This includes working to ensure growth and investments are occurring throughout the County and not just in the larger centres. This goal and the actions to achieve the goal rely on our business retention and expansion, support for entrepreneurship and investment attraction initiatives outlined below. The goal also reinforces that County's growth will be driven by agri-business, value-added agriculture, agri-tourism and food processing and that Economic Development and Tourism must support this vital sector.

The 2022 business plan proposes a Countywide Community Improvement Plan (CIP) that would directly support this goal. A Countywide CIP would provide an incentive to existing and new businesses to improve, expand or establish a business in appropriately zoned locations across the County. Similar CIP programs in Elgin, Wellington, Grey, Bruce and other neighbouring counties have demonstrated the return on investment in this program and the CIP model can be tailored to meet the unique needs of Perth County. This Countywide CIP aligns with the goals of many of the lower tiers as their strategic plans and workplans indicate a desire to pursue the development of a CIP.

The 2022 business plan also demonstrates the continued commitment to attracting residents and workers to Perth County helping drive economic growth and make the

community more attractive for future residents and business investment. Economic Development and Tourism continues to participate in a variety of committees and associations that focus on workforce and resident attraction as well as supporting those who choose Perth County as a place to live, work and play.

Growth & economic development, workforce attraction & retention rely on transportation links to help move people across the County and is essential to the long-term prosperity and sustainability of the County. Continuing to market the PC Connect transportation service, building strategic partnerships to increase ridership and continuously improving the service will build the transportation links that were identified in the strategic plan.

### ***Goal 3: Customer Service Excellence***

Perth County's Economic Development and Tourism Division continues to mature. Through continuous outreach to businesses through phone calls, surveys, and committee and community engagement, staff are continuously working to understand and deliver on the changing needs of the business community. This customer service excellence has never been more important by focusing on meeting the needs of businesses through the stages of recovery in 2022; Perth County can deliver on the goal of service excellence. Our municipal partners are our customers and by continuing to engage with them through regular outreach and participation on local committees, staff will continue to work towards the best model for economic development and tourism services at both the overarching and local level.

### ***Goal 4: Community Development & Planning***

The goal of community development goes hand in hand with economic development. As the County looks to grow and diversify its economic base, it must also work to ensure that it remains an attractive destination for residents of all ages. Through the division's workforce development activities, the goal of building community ensures that Perth County remains vibrant, livable and attractive. Support for business and community organizations is a critical piece of this community development and engagement goal and the 2022 business plan demonstrates how the County will continue to work with its partners to build a community that is welcoming and inclusive.

## 2021 Achievements

### Marketing and Promotions

- Advertised Perth County as a great place to visit, do business, grow and prosper in 12 national publications.
- Designed and distributed 50,000 Discover More Tourism Brochures locally, and at regional points of interest.
- Completed the expansion of the Discover More Flavour Farm Gate Map program. This included a redesigned of the digital map, a revamped printed map and the distribution of 35,000 copies across Perth County and neighbouring communities. This also included the distributed of 80+ signs and promotional packages to participating farm gates.
- Recruited and hosted three media writers to highlight tourism attractions from various points of view and on different online platforms.
- Developed and launched several promotional campaigns to support the Perth County business community such as the Perth County Mystery Box Program with 140 participants and the Travelling Deal Wheel hosted at local 10 businesses with prizes from 15 local businesses.
- Developed four itineraries for the Culinary Tourism Alliances Great Taste of Ontario Road Trip which was featured on the online digital passport and Globe and Mail special travel editions.
- Hosted 16 media influencers from the Travel Media Association of Canada on a Perth County Road Trip highlighting champion tourism destinations and new Discover More Adventures experiences.
- Hosted two Ontario By Bike workshops to share cycle tourism opportunities with the business community and municipal partners with 56 attendees.
- In partnership with Destination Stratford and the Town of St Marys we developed a Perth County Cycle Map and webpage. Worked with our Regional Tourism Organization Four (RTO4) and launch a storytelling campaign promoting the Discover More Flavour Farm Gate Program.
- Hosted three event sites at an inaugural Tastings on the Trail event on the Goderich Tow Guelph (G2G) Rail Trail.
- Provided professional photography services to 43 businesses and four business associations to assist with digital website or e-commerce needs to adapt to COVID-19 through our Snapshot program.
- Ran the '10 Days of Giveaways' social media program that encouraged shop local, takeout and e-commerce support to businesses during the provincial lockdown which garnered 2500 entries.
- Delivered the 'Takeaway to Getaway' program which partnered restaurants relying on takeout during the provincial lockdown with 48 hotel vouchers for local night stays and staycations.
- Partnered with RTO4 to promote and deliver the Tourism Adaptation and Recovery Program that supported 15 Perth County businesses in the technology and

physical adaptations streams. Physical adaptation projects included equipment purchase and modifications to buildings or space to support physical distancing, enhanced outdoor activity and other public health recommendations. Examples of projects in the physical adaptation stream included addition of takeout windows, physical barriers (walls/plexiglass) and outdoor heaters to extend season. Technology adaptation projects supported adoption of tools, hardware and digital assets to help businesses offer products and services online as well as implement digital screening, advanced bookings and other technology to adapt to COVID-19. Examples of Perth County projects funded through this program included installation of touchless payment systems and camera systems to allow for virtual participation.

- Developed a support local media campaign through commercials on CTV Kitchener & London during prime-time news.
- Hosted winter advertisements on digital roofscape screens located in both Toronto's Dundas Square and Gardiner Expressway.
- Developed and executed the Discover More Adventures Experiential Tourism Project. Held three experiential tourism workshops with 29 local businesses, developed eight signature experiences across Perth County, launched an online holiday campaign including three promotional videos, created and mailed out 35,000 Discover More Adventures holiday promotional postcards to residents across Perth County.

## **Policy and Programming**

- Led the development of the Perth County Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Charter and public engagement including facilitating the completion of 102 surveys, four community roundtables, senior management team roundtable and individual interviews.
- Delivered the Perth County Housing our Future workforce forum which delivered information on policy and best practice for housing development to 78 registrants.

## **Business Retention and Expansion**

- Conducted the Impact of COVID Survey 3.0 with 96 business completions
- Completed a Triage Business Retention and Expansion Survey. 160 businesses participated.
- Partnered with Destination Stratford, the Town of St. Marys and InvestStratford to deliver the Rapid Test Program for small businesses through Communitech.
- Delivered 100 Re-Opening Kits to businesses following the second provincial lockdown.
- Launched the Perth County Digital Service Squad providing digital support to 150+ businesses. Supported 24 businesses in accessing \$32,500 in Digital Transformation Grants through Digital Main Street Ontario.

- Completed 90+ virtual investment meetings with the Southern Ontario Marketing Alliance, Ontario Food Cluster and the Ontario Manufacturing Community Alliance.
- Completed two one-page marketing sell sheets for food processing and auto manufacturing the Southern Ontario Marketing Alliance to use while meeting with potential investors.
- Offered intercultural competency training to businesses across Perth County.
- Developed a marque resilience video to celebrate business adaptation and foster ongoing community support to shop and support local.
- Partnered with Stratford and St. Marys to develop a collective letter indicating much needed support for the struggling accommodation sector. Conducted calls to accommodation providers to understand issues and gaps in COVID-19 funding programs.

### **Workforce Engagement and Attraction**

- Hosted a Virtual 'Mentor Meet Up' with five local mentors sharing their stories of why they made Perth County home.
- Distributed 400 Co-Op Kits to the Avon Maitland District School Board and the Huron Perth Catholic District schoolboard highlighting businesses along the PC Connect route as potential co-op locations.
- Developed four recruitment and promotional videos for businesses to utilize as they continue to adapt.
- Distributed 200 Perth County Commuter Packages to local businesses and business associations.

### **Transportation Initiatives/PC Connect**

- Provided a total of 3,747 rides on PC Connect to date. (Data until November 30, 2021)
- Maintained an average month-over-month ridership growth rate of 23%, despite heightened COVID-19 restrictions and stay-at-home orders.
- Distributed over 10,000 PC Connect route brochures to residents, businesses, and organizations through Canada Post Neighbourhood Mail and community outreach.
- Met with both the Avon Maitland District School Board and Catholic District School Board to promote the service for co-op opportunities and/or students in need.
- Developed and executed a PC Connect feedback campaign which concluded that 100% of participants were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service.
- Sold 1,408 pre-paid fare tickets to social services and other organizations to distribute to clients and residents. (Data until November 30, 2021)
- Secured a two-year project extension with additional funding from the Community Transportation Grant program.

- Promoted PC Connect through various community outreach opportunities such as presentations to Conestoga College Career Centre, Stratford Rotary Club, WIL/Immploy to generate ongoing and predictable ridership.

**Major Initiatives for 2022:**

<b>Projects</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Advertising Perth County as the place to visit, do business, grow and prosper</b>	Advertising, direct marketing, web and social media, strategically marketing Perth County as a great place to visit, grow and prosper. Extend the target market for tourism attraction beyond neighbouring regions and into the GTA as tourism assets and marketing collaterals continue to be developed.
<b>Tourism Brochure</b>	Design and distribute tourism brochures regionally at points of interest. Direct mailout of brochure to targeted markets within day trip distance. Brochure inserts included in The Globe and Mail.
<b>Farm Gate Program Expansion</b>	Continue the expansion of the Discover More Flavour signage program.  Work with Tourism Stratford and develop a from 'Perth Farms to Stratford's Table' program.
<b>Municipal/Business Association Support, Stakeholder/Industry organization engagement</b>	Support to member municipalities, BIAs and Business Associations and Chambers and engaging with stakeholder/industry organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Perth Ec Dev / West Perth Ec Dev</li> <li>• Mitchell BIA / Milverton BA / Millbank BA / Listowel BIA</li> <li>• Tourism Industry Association of Ontario</li> <li>• Economic Development Council of Ontario</li> <li>• Ontario By Bike</li> <li>• Culinary Tourism Alliance</li> <li>• Stratford and Area Human Resources Association</li> <li>• Listowel Win This Space Committee</li> <li>• North Perth Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Huron Perth Association of Realtors</li> <li>• Southwestern Ontario Marketing Alliance Membership</li> <li>• Perth East Twinning Initiative Group</li> <li>• Partners in Resources for Employment (PREP)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycle Stratford</li> </ul>
<b>Southern Ontario Marketing Alliance</b>	<p>The Southwestern Ontario Marketing Alliance (SOMA) is a partnership of Southwestern Ontario communities, grown out of natural economic ties. This region, known as Canada's Industrial Heartland, encompasses the municipalities of Ingersoll, Perth, Stratford, St. Thomas, Tillsonburg, and Woodstock. It stretches across Elgin, Oxford and Perth Counties.</p>
<b>Community Improvement Plan (CIP)</b> (Applied for RED Funding September 2021) <b>Unsuccessful</b>	<p>Develop a Countywide Community Improvement Plan that enables economic development, investment and COVID recovery across the County. The CIP would will have particular focus on target sectors including value-added agriculture, tourism, housing and economic diversification. The CIP would address an increasingly competitive landscape for investment with the prevalence of CIPs in surrounding counties.</p>
<b>Economic Development and Tourism Webpage Update</b>	<p>Update, streamline and re-organize the Economic Development and Tourism webpages on <a href="http://www.perthcounty.ca">www.perthcounty.ca</a>.</p> <p>Update industry page for business owners and operators to connect with current and available information and resources.</p>
<b>Cycle Tourism Strategy</b> (Applied for Tourism Relief Funding September 2021)	<p>Perth County will utilize a consulting firm with expertise in destination development to create a Tourism Cycle Strategy. The Tourism Cycle Strategy will guide Perth County Tourism and community partners in cycle tourism development over the next five years. The burgeoning cycle tourism market provides an opportunity for safe, outdoor tourism activity within the County.</p>
<b>Perth County Cycle Tourism Sector Development Initiative</b> (Applied for RED Funding September 2021)	<p>The cycle tourism initiative will assess cycle tourism assets, work with stakeholders on marketing direction and deliver a Perth County cycle map, cycle tourism marketing creative templates (logos, signage, wayfinding) and guidelines for partners to participate in cycle tourism marketing. This project will leverage Perth County's recent membership in the Ontario by Bike network. The project outcomes will include cohesive and coordinated branding and marketing for the sector as well as tangible marketing assets for further destination development.</p>

<p><b>CanExport Community Investments 2022 Application</b> (Applied for funding November 2021)</p>	<p>Implement a client relationship management (CRM) program and software that will enable more targeted follow up and nurturing of investment leads and inquiries. Community Profiles Refresh with updated census data FDI Training for Economic Development Staff.</p>
<p><b>Available Lands/EcDev Map</b></p>	<p>Working in partnership with the Huron Perth Association of Realtors to map available properties using Perth County's GIS platform. This project will help better promote commercial property investment opportunities available across Perth County.</p>
<p><b>Experiential Tourism Training Program</b> (Applied for funding through the My Main Street Activator Program)  Unsuccessful for My Main Street Funding– reapplying for the second intake with modifications to application with a larger community component.  (Applied for RT04 Funding to support this project)</p>	<p>Continue to grow the Discover More Adventure program by providing experience development training to enhance product and service planning and visitor experience implementation. This project addresses opportunities in experience development and collaboration within the sector addressing gaps in products and services geared toward experiential activities within our existing and tourism sector.</p>
<p><b>Workforce Development Projects</b></p>	<p>Ongoing projects with stakeholders and partners. Joint projects with education and training partners to promote career opportunities and support resident retention and attraction. Promote career opportunities, support youth retention by supporting the mobile learning lab with TTG/AMDSB/Huron County/InvestStratford.</p>
<p><b>SnapShot Program</b> (Applied for RTO4 Funding)</p>	<p>Continued to build our photo library to capture new business, attractions or events, while providing local businesses with free professional photography. Continue to add to the four-season photo bank that is available for deployment in various design and creatives.</p>
<p><b>Economic Development Newsletters and Publications</b></p>	<p>Continue to produce quarterly newsletters, including updating format to suit both email and magazine style. Distribution online to 1,600+ email list and at key local</p>



	destinations such as municipal buildings, libraries, PC Connect, etc.
<b>Business Retention and Expansion</b>	Implement initiatives from the Business Retention and Expansion program completed in 2021.
<b>My Main Street Ambassador Program</b> (Applied for funding through the My Main Street Accelerator Program)  Unsuccessful – if another round of funding becomes available the Perth County does not need to reapply – our application will be automatically resubmitted.	The My Main Street Ambassador Local Business Accelerator program provides hands on dedicated business advisory support to entrepreneurs along six of our Business Corridors.  (Shakespeare, Sebringville, Dublin, Monkton, Atwood and Milverton)  This funding will support a twelve-month contract staff to run the program.
<b>Perth County Public Bicycle Share Program (PBSP)</b> (Applied for funding through the My Main Street Activator Program)  Unsuccessful – reapplying for the second intake with modifications to the application with an increased footprint in placemaking	The Perth County Public Bike Sharing Program (PBSP) is a conceptual project that would introduce physical enhancements to the community by providing bicycles and docking stations for public use. The PBSP would be designed to allow users to rent a bicycle for a specific period of time, and simply return it to the docking station when complete. As the program grows and more bicycle stations are installed, users will be able to pick-up a bicycle and return it to any hub throughout the county. The bike share can be used for commuting to work and school, running errands, riding with friends, riding to a transit stop, and generally to get around. The PBSP would create a unique and inclusive opportunity for residents to experience, whether leveraging the program to access daily needs, or to participate in leisurely recreational activities.
<b>Tourism Writer Recruitment/Media Influencers</b>	Recruit travel writers and influencers to Perth County to highlight tourism attractions from various points of view and on different online platforms. Each influencer attracted brings a unique audience and showcases a variety of experiences available throughout Perth County.
<b>Local Business Information and training Sessions</b>	Continue to host and support the Perth Community Futures Development Corporation and the Stratford Perth Centre for Business activities and programing.
<b>Welcoming Communities Online Training</b>	Continue to offer the online modules of the three Welcoming Communities Training developed in partnership with Fanshawe's Corporate Training

(Carry over from 2021)	<p>Solutions and Intercultural Competency Advantage Program.</p> <p>Training modules include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Essentials of Intercultural Competency</li> <li>2. Effective Intercultural Communications</li> <li>3. Power Dynamics and Systemic Discrimination.</li> </ol>
<b>Government Advocacy for Rural Perth County</b>	<p>Participate in Queen's Engagement days with EDCO, TIAO, and Perth County Federation of Agriculture/Randy Pettapiece Rural Farm Day. Take every opportunity to engage with local politicians, MPP, MP's to discuss rural issues such as transportation, housing, workforce development, etc.</p>
<b>Immploy</b>	<p>Continue to work with Immploy to deliver programming, events and information that supports urban newcomer awareness of employment opportunities in the County.</p>
<b>Tradeshows/Events /Job Fairs/College &amp; University Fairs</b>	<p>Participate in consumer tradeshows promoting Perth County as a destination, and job fairs across the GTA and Southern Ontario to promote available jobs.</p>
<b>Presentations/Outreach</b>	<p>Deliver presentations on Perth County's innovative approaches to youth attraction, engage with local and regional community organizations to raise the profile of the County and continue building awareness of tourism, employment, transportation and investment opportunities.</p>
<b>Annual Business Directory Update</b>	<p>Continue to update with new businesses, update old and closed businesses and ensure CASSL consent.</p>
<b>PC Connect Community Outreach</b>	<p>Continue to build the ridership of the service through sustained marketing efforts. Establish strategic partnerships with community groups and social service providers to provide a cost-effective option for their members and clients and generate ongoing and predictable ridership.</p>
<b>PC Connect Employer Outreach</b>	<p>Meet with large employers across the County to market the service to their employee base and potential employees. Develop partnerships that generate recurring revenue and ridership that both assists with longer term sustainability and addresses acute labour force challenges.</p>
<b>PC Connect Booking and Service Improvements – APP</b>	<p>Work with Voyago to implement a mobile app to allow for advanced payment, booking and real-time tracking of travel. Work in collaboration with the SCTA to enable</p>

	seamless transit across all community transportation services for enhanced rider experience.
<b>PC Connect Funding Alternatives</b>	Investigate alternative sources of funding for the longer-term sustainability of the PC Connect service including Gas Tax, FCM grants and any infrastructure and community funding released in response to COVID 19 recovery. Investigate advertising and sponsorships with private businesses to diversify revenue streams beyond ridership.
<b>PC Connect Service Enhancements</b>	Leverage service data and community feedback to determine and implement necessary service enhancements. Investigate creative ways to integrate demand-responsive-transit features in order to provide a more sustainable service.
<b>PC Connect GO Train Integration</b>	Work with project partners and Metrolinx to better position PC Connect as a feeder service for the new Go Train extension, in order to further extend connectivity and transportation options for residents.
<b>Co-Op Student</b>	Work with Secondary schools to resume taking on a co-op student.
<b>Great Taste of Ontario Road Trip</b>	Continue to develop itineraries for the Culinary Tourism Alliances GTOO featuring Perth County businesses and attractions to be featured on the online digital passport and Globe and Mail special travel editions.
<b>Four County Labour Market Planning Board</b>	Contribute to the data sharing and needs related to workforce and participate on projects with benefit to recruitment and retention by local employers.
<b>Technical Training Group</b>	Manager of Economic Development and Tourism is a Director on the Technical Training Group, Board of Directors.
<b>University of Waterloo Economic Development Certificate Program Student Projects</b>	Provide case studies for students of the Economic Development Certificate Program. These case studies both serve as educational tools for students and opportunities/business cases for new County programs and projects.
<b>Huron Perth Ag Science Centre</b>	Provide support to the Huron Perth Ag Science Centre Board
<b>Corporate Communications</b>	<i>Continue to support on-going activities related to communication for all departments and politicians.</i>

**\*\*\* Currently under the Office of the CAO to assist with strategic initiatives and communications, returning to the Economic Development and Tourism portfolio in 2023\*\*\***

*Continue to formalize the communications function and role across the municipality.*

*On a continued basis, staff completed the following activities and provided ongoing support related to communication for all departments and politicians:*

- *Warden's/Council Remarks for events*
- *PerthCounty.ca Website*
  - *Approved Event Submissions*
  - *Content Approvals/Editing*
  - *Posted Notices of Office Closures*
  - *Posted other main-page alert banner (public engagement sessions, incidents, etc.)*
- *Staff support – assist and advise staff on communications related components to a variety of projects and events (AMO Conference Delegations, New Official Plan, New Strategic Plan, Budget, public engagement)*
- *Social Media*
  - *Post relevant content to social media (LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter) about Corporate initiatives and activities*
  - *Create Facebook event pages to manage and encourage public engagement*
  - *Monitor contributor posts for consistency and quality of content*
  - *Monitor comments, tags, etc.*
  - *Monitor and share relevant content from member municipalities and key partners*
  - *Post office closure information*
  - *Develop content to educate and elevate the visibility of the Corporation and its functions in the community*
  - *Manage lists of posting authorities*
  - *LinkedIn – manage corporate page, post jobs and relevant corporate activities*
- *Media/News Releases*
  - *Draft press releases and public statements as needed*
  - *Review and edit press releases generated by other divisions*
  - *Respond and direct media inquiries accordingly*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Update and maintain local media contact list</i></li> <li>○ <i>Review and proofread wording for printed material and press releases to ensure a cohesive tone is maintained</i></li> <li>● <b>Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Act as a resource for staff for internal and external communications</i></li> <li>○ <i>Provide training and coaching on communications best practices and procedures (particularly regarding social media)</i></li> <li>○ <i>Communications support and resource for member municipalities</i></li> <li>○ <i>Collaborate and work jointly to support communications efforts of member municipalities as well as partner initiatives with Stratford and St. Marys</i></li> <li>○ <i>Coach businesses in social media assistance</i></li> <li>○ <i>Train County Staff on Website, social media, Canva, etc.</i></li> <li>○ <i>Organize training from external sources for county Staff and Council</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Policy Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Continue to work to formalize program documents and policies to mature the Corporate Communications program</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**Major Initiatives for 2023:**

<b>2023 Goals / Objectives</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Economic Development Strategy</b>	Build an updated framework to guide the direction and activities of economic development and tourism post-COVID economic realities and understand emerging opportunities/priorities.
<b>Continue Advertising Perth County as the place to do business, grow, and prosper</b>	Advertising, direct marketing, web and social media, strategically marketing Perth County as a great place to visit, grow and prosper. Extend the target market for tourism attraction beyond neighbouring regions and into the GTHA as tourism assets and marketing collaterals continue to be developed.

<b>Tourism Brochure</b>	Design and distribute tourism brochure, regionally at points of interest. Direct mail out of brochure to targeted markets within day trip distance.
<b>Farm Gate Program Expansion</b>	Continue the expansion of the Discover More Flavour signage program.
<b>Community Improvement Plan Implementation</b>	Continued implementation and ongoing evaluation.
<b>Municipal/Business Association Support</b>	Continue to provide support to Member Municipalities, BIAs and Business Associations and Chambers with a focus on a return to normal operations and increased events and programming post-pandemic.
<b>Southwestern Ontario Marketing Alliance</b>	Continue to mature the County's FDI programming and expertise as municipal lands come online and servicing developments occur across the County.
<b>Perth County Cycle Tourism Sector Development Initiative</b>	Further develop cycle tourism assets, work with stakeholders on marketing and promotion of cycling programming across the county.
<b>Investment Attraction</b>	Continue to provide targeted follow up and nurturing of investment leads and inquiries.
<b>Experiential Tourism Ambassador Training Program</b>	Continue to grow the Discover More Adventure program by providing experience development training to enhance product and service planning and visitor experience implementation. This project address opportunities in experience development and collaboration within the sector addressing gaps in products and services geared toward experiential activities within our existing and tourism sector.
<b>Workforce Development Projects</b>	Ongoing projects with stakeholders and partners. Joint projects with education and training partners to promote career opportunities and support resident retention and attraction. Promote career opportunities, support youth retention by supporting the mobile learning lab with TTG/AMDSB/Huron County/InvestStratford
<b>Tourism Writer Recruitment</b>	Focus resources on promoting media writers to our area, encouraging them to write stories on their experiences here and focus on post COVID recovery.
<b>Business Retention and Expansion</b>	Continue implementing the Business Retention and Expansion initiatives identified in the 2021 Triage Business Retention and Expansion Survey.

<b>Local Champion Familiarization Tour</b>	Organize a familiarization tour for front line staff, municipal staff and stakeholders.
<b>Perth County Brand Champions</b>	Maintain integrity of the Perth County brand and provide support and approvals to all divisions/departments and staff to ensure colours/logo placement/use and verbiage represents the Perth County brand values.
<b>PC Connect Service Pivot</b>	Transition the PC Connect fixed-route service to an on-demand offering, providing transit where and when it's needed. Integrating on-demand features will have the potential to provide a more economically and environmentally sustainable service. (Data & ridership dependant).

## Financial Allocation/Deployment Plan

Service	FTE Requirements by Year			
	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Economic Development and Tourism Division</b>				
<b>Total Program FTE Requirements</b>	<b>3.04</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>4</b>

### Significant Variances

- Transportation Coordinator position (1FTE) operates within the division and is funded through the CT Grant

### Training and Development

- Annual Association Conferences
  - Annual Economic Development Council of Ontario Conference
  - Annual Tourism Industry Association of Ontario Conference
  - Marketing Program Development Training for Tourism Officer
  - Sector specific workshops or training provided by Ministry (OMAFRA, Ministry of Economic Development)
  - Various training workshops pertinent to positions within the Economic Development and Tourism Division.