



Staff Report

Strategic Initiatives – Economic Development

Report To: Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting
Meeting Date: Meeting Date
Report Number: SI.25.027
Title: 2025 Local Business Association Funding Program
Prepared by: Tim Hendry, Director of Strategic Initiatives

A. Recommendations

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee receive Staff Report SI.25.027, entitled “2025 Local Business Association Funding”;

AND THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee endorses the 2025 Local Business Association funding allocation as follows:

- Blue Mountain Village Association: \$5,000.00
- Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce: \$5,000.00
- Clarksburg Village Association: \$5,000.00
- Institute of Southern Georgian Bay: \$5,000.00
- Thornbury Business Improvement Area: \$5,000.00

AND THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee requests that Council consider the approval of the funding allocations at the July 14, 2025 Council meeting.

B. Overview

This report seeks endorsement of the 2025 Local Business Association Funding program applications from the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

C. Background

The Local Business Association Funding Program was established in May 2021 through report [FAF.21.073](#). The program provides a maximum funding allocation of up to \$5,000.00 per business association to support various economic development-related initiatives. Applications received through the program are reviewed by the Town’s Economic Development Advisory Committee, with formal approval granted by Council.

The funding program was created to recognize and support the important work of associations that advance the Town’s economic development priorities. Since its inception, the program has

allocated approximately \$90,000 in funding to the association in support of events, activities, initiatives and capital items to improve and strengthen the Town of Blue Mountains as a place to live, visit and conduct business. Funding highlights include:

- **Event Support:** Support of key community events in Thornbury, Clarksburg and Blue Mountain Village, including but not limited to: Canada Day, Olde Fashioned Christmas, Apple Pie Trail, Artsburg Days, Apple Harvest Festival, Clarksburg Kid’s Fest, etc. Activation of downtown Thornbury, including musicians and performers;
- **Local Business Support:** Professional development and networking events for the local business community and the launch of shop local promotions, including the “Love Local” initiative through COVID-19;
- **Tourism Support:** Tourism marketing and product development to support tourism operators; and
- **Beautification:** Purchase of seasonal decor and community beautification items (flags, flowers, displays, etc.).

Of note, staff report [SI.25.020](#) was approved by Council in April 2025, which recommended that the list of eligible business associations be updated to include the Institute of Southern Georgian Bay.

D. Analysis

Through the application process, Town staff worked with lead representatives for each business association to determine the applicability of their financial requests. Town staff have reviewed each request and confirmed that it meets the objectives outlined in the Town’s Economic Development Strategy and Destination Development Strategy.

Details regarding the applications received and the amount requested are detailed in the chart below:

Business Association	Description of Request	Amount Requested
Blue Mountain Village Association	Funding will be used to strengthen the presence of the village as a destination through enhanced beautification efforts and garden rehabilitation throughout Blue Mountain Village.	\$5,000

<p>Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Funding will be used to host professional development events for The Blue Mountains business community. The events will focus on networking and continuous learning opportunities with guest speakers from various fields providing information and advice that is relevant to local small business owners and not-for-profit leaders. Potential workshop topics include diversity and inclusion training, digital marketing, launching a new business, cybersecurity and legal advice for small businesses.</p>	<p>\$5,000</p>
<p>Clarksburg Village Association</p>	<p>Funding will be used to support community events and beautification efforts in downtown Clarksburg. Efforts will include marketing support for events such as Arts Walk, Clarksburg Century of the Classics and Artsburg Day. Beautification efforts will include the enhancement of flower boxes in the village.</p>	<p>\$5,000</p>
<p>Institute of Southern Georgian Bay</p>	<p>Funding will be used to support key Institute programming in the area of climate action, affordable housing and regional collaboration. Specifically, the funding will help fund communications, venue rental, local contractors and the delivery of both virtual and in-person public engagement events.</p>	<p>\$5,000</p>
<p>Thornbury Business Improvement Area</p>	<p>Funding will be used to launch a location-based visitor platform that allows users to explore local businesses, stories, and points of interest in Thornbury through an interactive mobile app and digital map. The funding would go toward the cost of the program as well as the creation of marketing collateral to promote the platform and encourage public engagement.</p>	<p>\$5,000</p>

E. Strategic Priorities

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

No environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of this report.

G. Financial Impacts

\$25,000 was approved through the 2025 Town budget to support the Local Business Association funding program.

Applications will be reviewed by the Town's Economic Development Advisory Committee, with formal approval granted by Council. A cheque presentation will be scheduled with the recipients to highlight the support and investment made by the Town.

H. In Consultation With

N/A

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of 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, Director of Strategic Initiatives si@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

None.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Hendry
Director of Strategic Initiatives

For more information, please contact:
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