

# DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & LEISURE SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN

February 5, 2010

## 1. DEPARTMENTAL MANDATE

### BACKGROUND

In May 2007, the Council of the Town of Parry Sound adopted a report and recommendations as the result of an organizational review of the Operations Department conducted by BMA Consulting. One of the recommendations was that Leisure Services and Economic Development be integrated to maximize efficiencies and effectiveness. The newly created department, Department of Economic Development and Leisure Services, is to focus on collaboration, integrated services with a synergistic approach to event planning, management, market research, community and economic development.

Recognizing that quality of life and economic development can not prosper in isolation, the integration of these services is vital to the overall well-being of the community. The Town of Parry Sound's Economic Development and Leisure Services Department will endeavour to work with community groups and organization, stakeholders and investors in a facilitative role, to maximize resources and opportunities. Theoretically and practically, a strong economy allows for an increased quality of life; likewise, a high quality of life allows for business growth and development.

In January, 2008, the Town of Parry Sound assumed operations of the Charles W. Stockey Centre for the Performing Arts and Bobby Orr Hall of Fame. The Centre is now managed through the Department of Economic Development and Leisure Services recognizing that the Centre provides leisure for many as well as serving as an economic driver. Key to the success of the facility is partnerships, community participation and financial accountability.

Since that time, the department has been stable.

### MISSION STATEMENT

To build relationships and partnerships with community groups and organizations, businesses and investors/developers which will help create a community that residents and businesses are proud to call home and visitors and investors want to be part of.

### MANDATE

To manage the leisure services and economic development services for the Town of Parry Sound

consistent with Council's Strategic Plan and Directives, in a manner that promotes community participation, growth and development, enhancing the quality of life, economic diversity and prosperity for residents and business alike.

Communication is key to the department's success; as such, the function of the department will be to ensure community user groups, partners and stakeholders have opportunity for input. This will be handled through a variety of communication pieces and community out-reach initiatives.

## **2. DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION**

The Department of Economic Development and Leisure Services consists of the following:

Director  
Leisure Services Coordinator  
Stockey Centre Manager  
Stockey Centre Marketing & Special Events Co-ordinator  
Bobby Orr Hall of Fame Manager  
Stockey Centre Hospitality Staff (part time & casual)  
Stockey Centre Box Office/Gift Shop Staff (part time & casual)  
Stockey Centre Technical Support (part time)  
Stockey Centre Custodial Staff (part time)  
Stockey Centre Technical Director (contract)  
CP Station Custodial Staff (part time)

Several seasonal staff support the department by delivering leisure programs and services. Examples of this include the Aquatics Program and the canteen service. On occasion, the department is also supported by temporary staff through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund or FedNor Youth Intern programs or University/College Co-op Programs. The department does not have a dedicated administrative support staff, however, the Administrative Assistant for the Finance & Administration Department is responsible for all filing.

Key to the success of the department is the relationships that can be established with the many non-profit community groups, other volunteers, the private sector, the Festival of the Sound, and Bobby Orr.

## STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES & OPPORTUNITIES

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Department is approachable and available	Limited resources with many demands	Provide leadership training to non-profit groups; promote sustainability	Becoming fragmented
Completion of Area Culture & Recreation Master Plan	Inability to deliver/ meet recommendations of Master Plan	Regional approach to culture & recreation program delivery & facility management	Budget constraints
Current broad network of contacts	Difficult to get information for communication pieces	New communication plan	Cost/ Budget constraints
Active/healthy living has become a National focus	This National focus may put pressure on the municipality to be the direct delivery agent of programs & facilities	Build on the momentum created by the National active living campaign and recruit volunteers & community leaders	Volunteer burn-out
Four-Laning	Makes Toronto that much closer for those who wish to leave the community	Reduced transportation costs for potential manufacturers, etc.	By-pass Parry Sound
Area Economic Development Strategy	Disagreement on funding formulas; too many projects	Regional approach; enhanced efficiencies & effectiveness	Political influence.
Community Volunteer Agencies who deliver community programming	Lack of community awareness that the groups/ programming exists	Comprehensive Leisure Guide	Budget constraints
Climate that is conducive to growth & development	Many of the influencers/ drivers are external (ie: CDN \$, labor availability, etc.)	Area Ec. Dev. Strategy	Budget constraints and potential to be too broad and loose focus

Engaged community partners through many Town programs (Youth Action Team, BOHF & Stockey Centre Advisory Committees, Community Affiliation Program, etc.)	Fluctuating economy impacts the \$ people have available for leisure activity or corporate donations	Staff dedicated to enhancing the sponsorship opportunities/ marketing/ programming	Sr. levels of government - cuts to programs (ie: Arts Presentation Program)
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### 3. THE CORE PRODUCTS & SERVICES WE PROVIDE

Following is a list of core services delivered through the Economic Development and Leisure Services Department:

- Partner in the implementation of the Area Economic Development Strategy
- Partner in the implementation of the Area Culture & Recreation Master Plan
- Development/Investor attraction
- Community readiness
- Events planning & implementation (direct and indirect hosting)
- Marketing, promotion & community awareness
- Community development (work with non-profit groups and volunteers)
- Product development (ie: Culture & Recreation Master Plan, Waterfront Master Plan, Bobby Orr Hall of Fame as product and Culture as Place)
- Research available grants
- Provide leadership development opportunities and education to non-profit community groups
- Conference coordination
- Policy development
- Community outreach
- Georgian Bay Country Advisory Committee
- Volunteer Network and support
- Parry Sound Area Chamber of Commerce Waterfront Committee
- Community awareness
- Direct and indirect delivery of leisure programs & services
  - materials and equipment requests
  - summer swim program
  - assisting with marketing & promotion
  - event planning/ program planning assistance
- Community Affiliation Policy (support program for non-profit groups)
- Municipal Assistant Program (grants & donations program)
- Municipal facility bookings and ice allocation

Arts and Culture promotion through concerts/theatre/events at the Stockey Centre  
Celebration of sport heritage through the Bobby Orr Hall of Fame.

#### 4. **THE PEOPLE SERVED/CUSTOMERS' NEEDS & EXPECTATIONS**

##### A. **Council:**

Council has adopted a 10 year Strategic Plan which identifies Strategic Directions. These Directions, specifically Economic Development & Quality of Life, form the basis for the Annual Economic Development & Leisure Services Action Plans. Council expects well researched information as it relates to development/investment and leisure services needs and opportunities. Council also expects that these opportunities be communicated to the residents at the appropriate time. In order to make informed decisions, Council needs and expects well researched recommendations regarding policy development and procedures. It is the responsibility of the Director and Leisure Service Coordinator to provide this service to Council.

##### B. **CAO and Staff Management Group:**

Town staff are critical to the success of the corporation and the implementation of Council's Strategic Plan. They are further critical to the immediate delivery of Economic Development and Leisure Services, such as maintaining the leisure facilities, keeping the Town clean and beautiful, assisting with administrative duties, scheduling of staff and forwarding inquiries, providing planning/technical information, etc. Communication tools such as the task tracker and ongoing dialogue with staff ensure that goals are met.

##### C. **The Community: Its Residents & Ratepayers**

Economic Development and Quality of Life are two of Council's Strategic Directions as identified by the community at public meetings and focus group sessions. Wherever possible, it is important to involve the residents and ratepayers not only in the goal-setting stage but also in the implementation stage. This Department manages this by engaging volunteers and serving as a facilitator/community developer for many non-profit groups and business agencies. These two goals are of particular interest to the community: as such, regular communication will be handled through the Sound Opportunities Newsletter, Annual Report, Charles W. Stockey Centre for the Performing Arts Advisory Committee, Bobby Orr Hall of Fame Advisory Committee, and ad hoc committee meetings.

##### D. **Provincial Agencies & External Resources**

The Economic Development and Leisure Services Department builds relationships with many provincial agencies and external resources, such as the Economic Development Council of Ontario, Ontario Recreation Facilities Association, Canadian Heritage, etc. Such relationships are critical to ensure the Department is aware of the latest trends, funding opportunities and

supports. Participation in these external agencies ensures the Department is educated and able to pass on opportunities to its community partners.

**E. Operations Department: Parks and Recreation Staff**

Effective communication is critical between and amongst departments. The Operations Department maintains facilities and schedules staff accordingly. The Economic Development and Leisure Services Department books the facilities for various users, recreation activities and special events. The Economic Development and Leisure Services Department also assists with the loan of equipment to various organizations for the delivery of community programs and events, and works co-operatively with the Operations Department to ensure the requests for materials are handled in a co-ordinated manner.

**F. Partners**

Building and strengthening partnerships with the various non-profit community groups and businesses /sponsors and potential developers is an important part of this Department's function. Partnerships are built on good communication. This will be a focus of the Department: engaging community partners. By listening to needs, informing partners of Council's policies and procedures, and supporting partners in a manner that enables them to realize their goals and objectives, the Department will have success in meeting its deliverables and ultimately contributing to a community with a high quality of life and economic viability.

**5. SUCCESSES / ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Implementing projects lends itself nicely to realizing successes/ accomplishments:

Bobby Orr Hall of Fame ~

Delivery of successful fundraising events that engage the community, stakeholders, volunteer and fans.

Stockey Centre ~

Development of several policies and procedures that contribute to increased effectiveness and efficiency. Successes have been realized through improved policies, practices and procedures. Accomplishments have also been noted in programming which has resulted in several sold out performances.

Operating the Stockey Centre and Bobby Orr Hall of Fame within the \$300,000. budget approved by Council.

Community Affiliation Policy -

In order to receive support from the Town, non-profit groups must register as an

		<p>Affiliated Community Group. This will allow Council &amp; staff to measure the amount of municipal support given to non-profit groups through reduced facility rentals, use of equipment, etc. It will also provide encouragement for groups to take advantage of leadership training opportunities. This was one of the BMA recommendations.</p>
Facility Bookings	-	<p>All facility bookings are now being handled through the Leisure Services Coordinator. The process to book a facility has been mapped and the booking calendar is now supported by electronic calendards. This was one of the BMA recommendations. Stockey Centre bookings take place at the Centre.</p>
Community Outreach	-	<p>Increased community outreach has taken place to assist community groups in a facilitative manner. Example: this department is now the contact for the Santa Claus parade, given the fact that the main organizer is not often available. This was one of the BMA recommendations.</p>
Regional Approach to Leisure Services		<p>The Town of Parry Sound, Seguin Township and Municipality of McDougall partner on 3 initiatives: (1) Regional Leisure Guide; (2) Youth Action Team; (3) Volunteer Management Policy/Development. This approach allows enhanced utilization of resources and better communication to area residents/ ratepayers.</p>
Area Economic Development Plan	-	<p>This plan represents the first time that the area municipalities have come together under a formal governance structure for the</p>

Improved Governance	<p style="text-align: right;">benefit of economic development. It is within the scope of this plan that the Area Culture &amp; Recreation Master Plan was completed in 2008, an effort undertaken with the Township of Seguin, Municipality of McDougall and the Town partnering.</p> <p>The new governance structure for the Stockey Centre has resulted in increased community buy-in and support as seen through the increase in school use and support from Bobby Orr.</p>
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## 6. THE INTERNAL BUSINESS PROCESSES PERSPECTIVE

The Area Culture & Recreation Master Plan process has included significant public consultation through surveys, focus group meetings, public meetings and key informant interviews. In this regard, it has given the community ample opportunity to communicate their leisure services needs and wants. The problem is that in many cases, the Town has acted as the delivery agent and the expectation is such that we continue to do so. The recommendation in the BMA report is to move to more of a facilitative role and work with community organizations/volunteers to realize the goals and objectives of the Economic Development and Quality of Life Strategic Directions.

Similarly, the Strategic Planning process undertaken in 2007 has also given the community opportunity to communicate visions regarding economic development, both broad scope and specific. Communication is an important component of this. For example, at times, the public does not understand the process involved in getting from point 'A' to point 'B' and can become disillusioned with how long it may take to get some things done. This is particularly true in the area of Economic Development when dealing with the private sector who can 'just go out and do things'. It is also true when dealing with non-profit groups who want to organize an event, for example, and require such things as a sign permit, festival licence, event planning form, etc., etc.,

Communicating Council's priorities and the Department's processes to the community and residents is a role of this Department. Regular communication is handled through the municipal web page, Sound Opportunity Newsletters, press releases, Leisure Guide, Town Page and the Annual Report. The community and residents are the major customer base for this Department.

The two newly established Advisory Committees - Stockey Centre, and Bobby Orr Hall of Fame - offer the Department the opportunity of being connected with the community. This provides an avenue for the community to have input into programming, policies and events at the Centre. Further, public meetings are held when and as needed to update ratepayers,

stakeholders & partners on municipal matters.

Review of technology is an ongoing exercise, particularly in the area of the Stockey Centre Box and the Theatre Manager system, specifically, if there are programs that will allow for a more effective maintenance of volunteers and memberships.

Most of the Economic Development and Leisure Services Department function is project-based, with a definitive beginning and end (ie: festivals & events, leisure programs, business attraction, education programs through the Stockey Centre/BOHF, performances and programming, etc.) . Also, much of the work involves community volunteers and external agencies and partners This makes the need for business planning, including objectives, action plans, measurables and time lines extremely important so that all involved know the expectations and deliverables. The current business planning process adopted by Council works very well as it includes Council's identified priorities, strategic directions and related budget. It is the responsibility of the Director, Leisure Services Co-ordinator, Bobby Orr Hall of Fame Manager, Stockey Centre Manager, and Marketing & Special Events Co-ordinator to develop the specific objectives, related budgets, action plans, measurables & timelines. This process serves as a "task tracker" for each identified project and allows for projects to be adjusted as necessary.

Core competencies have also been identified through the Business Planning process. The identified core competencies will further solidify the direction and plan of action.

The Human Resources Optimization Plan is also being reformatted which will become an integral part of the Business Planning process.

## **7. THE LEARNING & GROWTH PERSPECTIVE**

Due to the flexible nature of economic development and leisure services, learning and growth must too be flexible and flow with the trends. Both of these areas have many external variables: global economy, community demographics. In order to meet the needs of the community in balance with Council's Strategic Directions, it is important that the Department remain abreast of the demographics of the community (ie: are our customers seniors, youth, what is our available labor force, etc.), as this influences the deliverables to some extent. It is also important that all Department staff maintain relationships with external partners/agencies, receiving training that may then later be shared with community groups and organizations.

Communicating with the community is key to establishing buy-in and participation. In this regard, all Department staff must work to establishing and building relationships with our partners and volunteers.

On a broader level, the Director participates in the corporate business planning processes and other corporate policy development. This is necessary as the outcomes of the business planning process are communicated to the residents/ratepayers.

Core competencies and training and development needs and opportunities required to meet the core competencies will be addressed through the Human Resources Optimization Plan.

Also important to the continuous improvement initiative for the Stockey Centre and Bobby Orr Hall of Fame is the ongoing focus on security procedures and other operational procedures to ensure accountability and consistency of service delivery.

## **8. THE FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE**

Financial targets for the next three years are to continue to operate the department within the budget approved by Council. As leisure trends are for ever changing and shifting, it is important that department staff remain abreast of these changes to accommodate the ongoing customer needs. (ie: trend reflects a move away from organized sport and recreation to an increase in leisure activities spent with families, etc.). Stockey Centre and Bobby Orr Hall of Fame staff will also need to stay abreast of trends and changes to their specific areas of operation.

A cost/benefit analysis is conducted for all new programming, information of which is included as part of the decision-making process.

New revenue opportunities are routinely reviewed (ie: memberships, sponsorships), with changes made as appropriate.

## **9. SUCCESSION PLANNING**

The Department is stable and does not anticipate any staff departures within the next 5 years. However, staffing compliment will be reviewed within the next couple of years to determine organizational/functional structure.