



Picton Business Improvement Area Association
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Mr. Dan Taylor
Economic Development Office
280 Main Street
Picton, ON K0K 2T0

Dear Mr. Taylor:

It is my pleasure to submit this letter of reference in support of the Economic Development Office (EDO). There is, in fact, no question in my mind that the Picton Business Improvement Association (BIA) would not exist today were it not for the leadership and support provided by the EDO to the BIA. To that end, much of the work with which we are involved at present can be credited to the EDO. Moreover, it can be said that without the strategic investment of the Economic Development Office toward the development of community-driven collaborations, our communities and our municipality directly would undoubtedly find itself hard-pressed to deliver the range of services, supports, and development that has occurred in Prince Edward County.

Specifically as it relates to the Picton BIA, I cannot stress strongly enough the importance of the EDO in having supported and incubated a process for downtown revitalization in Picton's core. It was, after all, the EDO that provided direct hands-on investment, guidance, and administration to the Picton Downtown Revitalization Committee. Through them, facilitated by the EDO, the BIA was able to apply for and subsequently hire administrative support as a result of having successfully acquired a grant to hire an intern. Subsequently, the Economic Development Office brought together the partners to apply for and successfully acquire a significant rural economic development grant which has already realized significant outcomes in Prince Edward County, most notably Wellington Beach development, the County's hugely successful Harvestin' The County initiative, and of course, Picton's Cenotaph redevelopment project. The BIA's downtown revitalization action plan, spearheaded by the revitalization committee through the EDO has continued to gain strength and has resulted in the development of community relationships to enable streetscape enhancement, cooperative activities and enhanced communication within the BIA membership, event coordination, and leadership to an evolving and increasingly relevant organization.

Just as importantly, the EDO continues to lead the way toward the development of new industries which continue to strengthen Prince Edward's and by extension the local economy. This is evidenced by the successes associated with the County's Build a New Life Campaign, for example. This campaign has promoted the benefits of the region and quality of place and has infused the local economy with considerable human and economic investment. Through "Build a New Life" the EDO has given birth to a relocation strategy which has brought huge numbers of visitors and in turn, new residents to the area, many of whom contribute to our communities by shopping locally, through volunteerism, capital investment, taxation, the labour market, and specific to the BIA, the development of an array of unique culinary, shopping and cultural services that contribute to the economic prosperity of downtown Picton.

The work of the Economic Development Office in promoting "The County's" creative economy has helped on the one hand, to stave off the depth of the economic impact experienced by many other communities as a result of the downturn in the global economy and on the other hand, strengthened the development of future industries, helping our members to adapt to and embrace new and evolving ways of working. To that end, Prince Edward County is on the cusp of doing for the knowledge and creative sectors what had previously been undertaken to develop the tourism and wine sectors in the region.

To be precise, I believe that our communities continue to evolve, our economies continue to change, and investment continues to occur as a direct result of the forward vision provided to our community by the Economic Development Office. To that end, I am happy to lend my support and to continue to work in partnership with the EDO to enhance the economic prosperity of the region.

Sincerely,

V. (Roni) Summers Wickens
Executive Director (consulting)