



February 2, 2017

Mr. Nelson Santos
Mayor of Kingsville
2021 Division Rd.
Kingsville, ON., N9Y 2Y9

Re: Request for Funding

Dear Mr Santos,

On behalf of the 33 businesses and organizations located on County Road 50 in southern Essex County which have formed the strategic alliance known as **Explore the Shore**, I am requesting that the Town of Kingsville consider our request for \$2,500 in funding to support the seventh Explore the Shore weekend event, scheduled for July 23 and 24, 2016.

Our tourism initiative, the end purpose of which is to create a robust business community and tax base along County Road 50, was created in April, 2010, when a group of neighbours hatched the idea over coffee.

We staged our first event in July, 2010, helped in large part by \$1,500 from the Town of Essex. The 2010 Explore the Shore was nominated for an Ontario Tourism Marketing Award as Best Marketing Campaign under \$25,000., and selected as one of three finalists.

The second Explore the Shore in July 2011 each year drew an estimated three times as many visitors as the 2010 event. The Town contributed \$5,000. in 2011 and that amount was doubled by a matching grant from the Ontario Market Investment Fund we obtained with support from the Town. We used our large budget in 2011 to build infrastructure (e.g. metal road signs for both ends of the route, 100 additional lawn signs, a website, etc.) and to publicize the event through postcard inserts in weekly newspapers throughout Essex County and selected radio spots for the two weeks before Explore the Shore.

The Town of Essex contributed \$5,000 in 2012, 2013 and 2014, and \$2,500 in 2015.

Our strategic alliance has used every penny on targeted promotion, having already learned what works best. The result has been a successful event each year, despite the sometimes-sweltering heat and, at least one year, chilly rain and the loss of two key anchor businesses, Klassen's Blueberries on the east end and the Meadows on the west. In every one of our six years, Explore the Shore has drawn thousands of visitors over two days.

We consider ourselves to be still a fledgling organization with years of work ahead to make our community a "destination" for the average Essex County resident and the now more frequent out-of-County tourist. We see the potential. We understand and are committed to the sustained effort needed to accomplish our goals.

Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island has assured us that it will support Explore the Shore for the long haul because they understand that it will take a sustained joint effort to accomplish the goal of making this a well-known, successful and beloved business district and destination.

As a lifelong resident and business owner of Meleg's Lakeview Orchard I see the value of promoting our town and businesses in our community. I was involved with Explore the Shore from the very beginning and we were the only business from Kingsville participating at the time. Since last year we have extended our event to include the whole length of county rd 50 right into town. We now have the Cedar Island Yatch Club involved and have been a great asset to our event. Also we were wondering if the town could host an event at Cedar Beach or the Cedar Island beach like the town of Essex has for ETS.

We hope you seriously consider our request for funding to make this event a larger success than it already is.

Sincerely,

Ann Neydon Wilson
Explore the Shore 2013
Communications Committee

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Thomas Meleg
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158 Arner Townline
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