



Municipality of Port Hope

56 Queen Street
Port Hope, ON
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REPORT TO: Community Development Committee

FROM: David Smith, Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Economic Development Strategy

DATE: December 7, 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

That a resolution be presented to Council to direct staff to prepare and issue a request for proposal (RFP) for the creation of an economic development strategy; and further;

That the strategy be funded out of the resources previously identified for a corporate-wide service delivery review and funded by the Municipal Modernization Program.

BACKGROUND:

In 2019 Council received an unconditional grant from the provincial government in the form of the Municipal Modernization Program. Funding was allocated to a number of projects including a Corporate wide service delivery review at \$100,000. This project is identified as an objective under the Corporate Efficiencies priority in the Strategic Plan.

Through consultation with Council, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) has adjusted this approach and is conducting service delivery reviews on an as needed basis per department.

To date, service delivery reviews for Community Development and MPS have been completed and Finance will be starting in January 2022. For each of these three reviews, alternate sources of funding have been identified and the original funding amount remains untouched.

One critical corporate need identified by the CAO, supported by the Community Development service delivery review and the Strategic Plan's Intentional Growth Priority is the need for an economic development strategy.

Economic development activity is a high priority as it supports community goals. Economic development is also a competitive endeavor between communities vying for opportunities. Port Hope has experienced low to moderate growth compared to other comparable communities. Without an evidence-based plan there is risk that our growth will remain low and becomes even more reactive than it currently is.

Economic development is the process of generating and sustaining wealth in the community. Port Hope has many unique assets attractive to employers and investment. Building on these assets is one of the best ways to create a vibrant, resilient and sustainable local economy. Economic development helps increase the strength and diversity of local and regional economies to create jobs; enhance its competitiveness; and, improve quality of life for all residents.

An economic development strategy provides a roadmap in undertaking those activities and initiatives that support a vibrant, resilient and sustainable local economy. A strong, evidence-based strategy would best position the community to meet the Municipality's strategic priorities.

An economic development strategy would include the following outcomes at minimum with agriculture and tourism identified as key sectors for review. Also to be highlighted is post pandemic recovery strategies and post PHAI risks.

Outcomes for the economic development strategy

- A comprehensive understanding of community assets and locational advantages
- Identification and awareness of key economic assets and emerging economic opportunities based on existing assets in relation to regional and global trends
- Economic vision development, consensus and awareness
- Identification of catalytic strategies, goals and objectives to generate sustainable economic opportunities and wealth in the community
- Assessment of opportunities for the strategic use of public financial incentives to maximize community objectives
- An implementation road map and structure to set the stage for stakeholder advancement of the economic vision

If approved the RFP would be issued in January and the project scheduled to be completed in Quarter 2 of 2022.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

This project would be funded out of the funds currently allocated for a Corporate Service Level Review. The remaining funds would remain to be used for the original purpose when needed. Three Service Level Reviews have been funded by alternate grants. Depending on the community consultation strategies of the successful proponent, the project is estimated to be approximately \$45,000.

CONCLUSION:

Economic Development is a key function of municipal government. Communities that are not active in this area are at high risk of falling behind on economic growth. An evidence-based plan, properly resourced is an appropriate strategy to ensure Port Hope continues to be a community for people to live and businesses to thrive.

Respectively submitted,

David Smith
Chief Administrative Officer