

# Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes

## Council Report

Report Number ED2020-016

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**Meeting Date:** May 26, 2020

**Title:** Economic Recovery Taskforce Terms of Reference

**Description:** Economic Recovery Taskforce Terms of Reference, appointments and update on current status

**Ward Number:** All

**Author and Title:** Rebecca Mustard, Manager, Economic Development

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### Recommendations:

**That** Report ED2020-016, **Economic Recovery Taskforce Terms of Reference**, be received;

**That** the Economic Recovery Terms of Reference as outlined in Appendix A to report ED2020-016 be approved, and;

**That** Mayor Letham, Deputy Mayor Councillor O'Reilly, Councillor Seymour-Fagan, and Councillor Veale, and the Directors of Development Services and Engineering and Corporate Assets be appointed to the Economic Recovery Taskforce; and

**That** the appointed Task Force members be delegated the authority to appoint the community representatives to the Task Force from the sectors as identified in the Terms of Reference.

**Department Head:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Financial/Legal/HR/Other:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Chief Administrative Officer:**\_\_\_\_\_

## **Background:**

At the Council Meeting of April 28, 2020, Council adopted the following resolution:

CR2020-113

Moved By Councillor Yeo Seconded By Councillor Seymour-Fagan

**That** the verbal report from Ron Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer, regarding an Economic Recovery Task Force, be received;

**That** an Economic Recovery Task Force be established;

**That** staff are directed to prepare the Economic Recovery Task Force Terms of Reference; and

**That** the final Terms of Reference and update to Council on interested stakeholders and volunteers be provided at the May 26 Council meeting.

This report addresses that direction.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges to the economy. In March, 2020, the Canadian economy alone lost one million jobs. This was the largest decline in history with the majority of jobs concentrated in accommodations, food service, retail trade and cultural industries and is only considered to be the beginning.

Locally, the Kawartha Lakes economy has been challenged with essential workplace lists and physical distancing impacting the ability for local businesses to operate. A resilient community, many local businesses have made tremendous efforts to reorient and adapt their business processes. However, this is not enough. There is a need for a municipal response to partner with provincial and federal initiatives, to strategically work towards economic recovery.

Economic development by definition is a process;

by which public, business and non-governmental sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation. Local economic development is thus about communities continually improving their investment climate and business enabling environment to enhance their competitiveness, retain jobs and improve incomes (World Bank & FCM)

Economic recovery from COVID-19 will require cooperation amongst a multitude of stakeholders. A key stakeholder in Kawartha Lakes, the municipality is a catalyst for, and a facilitator of, local economic development and the actions of the municipality in supporting the recovery of local businesses and resilience of the local economy are crucial.

## **Rationale:**

The Economic Recovery Taskforce is focused on stimulating local economic recovery created by the COVID-19. The Taskforce will focus on three strategic areas where the municipality can act as a catalyst to stimulate the local economy; (1) critical infrastructure investments; (2) planning and development stimulus, and; (3) business recovery and support. The Terms of Reference are included in Attachment A.

Taskforce primary members will be Councillors, Staff, Directors and representatives of the infrastructure, development and business community.

The Taskforce will establish Working Groups to address specific economic response and recovery needs. These Working Groups will include representation from local Chambers of Commerce, Business Improvement Area, sector and industry associations.

At the discretion of the Taskforce, Working Groups may be organized in various ways, including by; community, sector (including agriculture and food, construction, arts/culture/heritage, manufacturing, retail, services, and tourism) associations (including Chambers of Commerce, Business Improvement Associations, industry associations, and Team Kawartha Lakes), and public interest.

Broader stakeholder engagement will be an important component of Taskforce work. The municipal **Jump In** platform will be a primary tool for this process.

## **Actions to date: Pandemic Response**

Since the municipality declared a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 24, 2020, Staff have worked, as permitted, on all three areas of focus;

- (1) **Critical infrastructure projects** municipal construction continued, primarily on projects that were underway and deemed critical and essential. Communication continued with the development community to

assist preparing next steps and readiness for continued construction, registration and the creation of lots when permitted.

- (2) **Planning and Development stimulus:** complete applications continue to be processed, as capacity and resources permit. Building Permits received have been processed with the goal to have permits issued in advance of the revocation of the provincial order to allow for industry partners to be shovel ready at that time.
- (3) **Business response and supports:** continue to be delivered remotely through a four-part approach;
1. Direct virtual business assistance: one-on-one consultations with local businesses (over 100 interactions since the end of March), COVID-19 workshop series;
  2. Sector based response: strategic information sharing, advocacy and communications with regional and provincial industry organizations;
  3. Business resources and communications: Creation and regular updating of the COVID-19 Business Resource page: [www.kawarthalakes.ca/COVID19 business](http://www.kawarthalakes.ca/COVID19_business), weekly update newsletter (over 3,000 subscribers), and social media program;
  4. Team Kawartha Lakes: collaboration of over 12 economic development and business organizations meeting bi-weekly to share information and coordinate response in support of Kawartha Lakes businesses.

## **COVID-19 Economic Recovery**

Following the April 28, 2020, Council meeting, Staff commenced strategic initiatives to support economic recovery in the three focus areas:

### **(1) Critical Infrastructure Investments**

A preliminary list of critical infrastructure projects has been identified;

- Active municipal (Attachment B) and 3<sup>rd</sup> party construction projects (Attachment C)
- Potential upcoming construction work (Attachment B)
- Development driven construction (Attachment D)

Resources are currently being reviewed to support the execution of these projects to stimulate construction and the community benefit at completion.

## **(2) Planning and Development Stimulus**

A preliminary list of shovel ready planning and development projects has been identified (Attachment E) to stimulate private sector development and job creation.

New processes are currently in place to continue services in the Planning and Building Divisions and meet the requirements of the provincial and municipal state of emergency. These include;

- Digital processing of general inquiries, compliance letters, consent and site plan applications;
- Virtual pre-screening and development review meetings (pre-consultation meetings will commence shortly)
- Receipt and circulation of new development applications

Staff continue to work on developing a process for public hearings, Planning Advisory Committee and Committee of Adjustment meetings that meet legislative and pandemic requirements.

The Local Planning Appeal Tribunal has been closed since the State of Emergency was declared until at least June 30<sup>th</sup>. While they are scheduling some settlement hearings through teleconferences and accepting some electronic documents, they are not presently accepting new appeals.

## **(3) Business Recovery and Support**

To support ongoing response and recovery efforts of the municipality and Team Kawartha Lakes partners, a survey of local business community was conducted between April 28- May 11, 2020. The survey was designed to identify strategic areas for local support and stimulus, and conducted in two phases;

- Phase One: a scientific phone survey was administered by the Economic Development Division between Tuesday April 28 to Monday May 4, 2020. A total of 179 surveys were completed.

- Phase Two: an online survey available to all Kawartha Lakes businesses between Monday May 4 and Monday May 11, 2020. This survey was shared through a press release, social media, the newsletter and Team Kawartha Lakes organizations. Over 300 surveys were completed.

Staff is following up with businesses that requested information or resources in their surveys.

Preliminary results from Phase One found the vast majority of businesses have experienced a decrease in business despite over half of businesses being considered essential by the Province of Ontario. Responses indicate immediate concerns of businesses are keeping customers, distribution and supply chains, choosing whether to stay open or close, meeting required staffing levels and staff health and safety.

While half of businesses found the government assistance announced to be helpful to their business, over a third did not find the assistance available to be helpful. The survey requested business input for the Economic Recovery Taskforce. This input and the full survey results will be analyzed and shared with the Taskforce.

In addition to the survey, staff are currently re-focusing municipal Economic Development programs to support the recovery of local businesses with a focus on five (5) key clusters as identified in the City's Economic Development Strategy; agriculture and food, arts/culture/heritage, innovation, manufacturing, and tourism. This includes the conclusion of the Destination Development Plan (Tourism Strategy) with an evidence-based response to COVID-19 and the development of a tourism marketing campaign.

### **Other Alternatives Considered:**

Council could choose an alternative format for the Economic Recovery Taskforce, however, it is not recommended due to the need for an immediate response to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the significant number of stakeholders that should participate in these activities.

## **Financial/Operation Impacts:**

This report does not create direct financial implications. Recommendations brought forward to Council from the Taskforce will have financial implications that will be presented at that time.

## **Relationship of Recommendations to the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan:**

The COVID-19 pandemic, while a health crisis, has had an unprecedented impact on economies around the world, including Kawartha Lakes. The Economic Recovery Taskforce aligns with the municipal goal of reviving a Vibrant and Growing Economy by working to stimulate the local economy and support recovery of the local business community.

## **Consultations:**

Chief Administrative Officer

Director, Development Services

Director, Engineering and Corporate Assets

Chief Building Official

Manager, Planning

Supervisor, Development Engineering

Discussions regarding this taskforce have been held with local and regional business organization, including Team Kawartha Lakes.

## **Attachments:**

Attachment A: Economic Recovery Taskforce Terms of Reference



Economic Recovery  
Terms of Reference -

Attachment B: Active and upcoming municipal projects



Attachment B -  
Active and Potential

Attachment C: Agency and 3<sup>rd</sup> party projects



Attachment C -  
Agency 3rd Party Prc

#### Attachment D: Development driven construction



Attachment D -  
Development Driven

#### Attachment E: Planning projects



Attachment E -  
Planning Projects.pc

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