



## Council Memorandum

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Date: July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020

To: Council

From: Mayor Letham

Re: Update on Economic Recovery Task Force.

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### Recommendation;

**THAT** the Memorandum from Mayor Letham, **regarding feedback from the Economic Recovery Task Force**, be received;

**THAT** Council turn on all of the Kawartha Lakes Strategic Community Improvement Plan (CIP) programs so that staff can promote the priority programs that align with recovery initiatives as needed; and

**THAT** Staff work towards re-structuring the program for a fall intake, and report back to Council on the program uptake.

### Rationale;

On July 7<sup>th</sup>, the Economic Recovery Task Force held its 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. The main goal of this meeting was to review the working group findings and the development applicants survey and solicit feedback from the group for discussion. I felt it important to forward to council for an update and for any further discussion that could then be brought back to the Task Force. This feedback from our community is important for council to see and I have included the entire working group summary as attachment 1. All participants expressed that the pandemic has had significant impacts on their businesses, however, the scope of impacts differs across the city. Some common recommendations across the groups, include need for improvement and availability of broadband services across the city, the value of workshops and training regarding doing business in a pandemic and how to operate safely, clear and regular communications from the city regarding changing requirements, recommendations regarding improvements in various aspects of the development process and permit issuing, marketing campaign built around welcoming visitors and creating a safe shopping experience for tourists and residents.



A point was also made of the need for municipal infrastructure and services support, specifically, availability of public washrooms, garbage receptacles and signage as a support for business as they reopen. Business recovery and support was a strategic priority set by the terms of reference.

Planning and Development stimulus was a second strategic priority. A key emphasis was advancing a focused approach to a streamlined execution of development policy and approvals. The intention of reviewing this area of activity was to assist the local economy by stimulating private sector construction and investment through residential and non-residential growth. In order to assess the current policy and approvals process, economic development staff undertook a survey of recent development applicants to gather their feedback on the process. A cross section of all type of applicants, large and small, was contacted. Each respondent was asked a standard set of questions which requested information about their applications, positive aspects, negative aspects, and suggestions for potential changes to the process. A number of common themes emerged from the surveys and generally fell into two broad areas of focus, specifically the need to streamline the application and approvals process and the need to develop and implement clear City policies regarding expectations and requirements from applicants. There were concerns identified about the amount of time it took to get an application from the pre-consultation to final approvals, and the City's requirements for development, specifically, the need for policies and procedures that make it clear to applicants what is required of them when submitting an application.

Attachment 2 is a copy of the Development Applicants Survey Summary for your information.

As a result of this discussion at the task force, it was decided to form a subcommittee made up of several public members and staff to investigate options further based on survey feedback and report back to the Task Force at a future meeting with recommendations.

It should be noted the goal of this review is not to criticize staff, but to review procedures and processes that could make their job and responsibilities easier to manage and in turn improve the experience for our customers. It must still be recognized that not all development can be accommodated as there remains a public process and Council decisions.

#### Community Improvement Plan

The Kawartha Lakes Strategic Community Improvement Plan (CIP) allows for the Municipality to provide a variety of financial incentive programs to business and property



owners. Council has the authority to “turn on and off” specific programs that encourage and support economic development in alignment with the City’s strategic priorities.

In the wake of COVID-19 it is important that programs to support economic recovery are agile and able to meet business needs. The By-Law that adopted the CIP names the director of Corporate Services with the authority and responsibility to administer the by-law.

#### Attachment 1 - Working Group Session 1 Recommendations



Attachment 1 -  
Working Group Ses:

#### Attachment 2 – Development Applicants Survey Summary



Attachment 2 -  
Development Applic