



## Council Report

Report Number ED2020-027

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**Meeting Date:** December 15, 2020

**Title:** Kawartha Lakes Skills Advance Ontario Programs  
Agreements with Victoria County Career Services and Sir  
Sandford Fleming College

**Description:** Delivery of the Skills Advance Ontario Job Seeker and  
Incumbent, Skills Training Program in the Manufacturing and  
Agricultural sectors within Kawartha Lakes

**Author and Title:** Danielle K Harris, Economic Development Officer- Workforce  
Planning

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### Recommendation(s):

**That** Report ED2020-027, **Kawartha Lakes Skills Advance Ontario Programs Agreements with Victoria County Career Services and Sir Sandford Fleming College**, be received; and

**That** the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute service agreements with Victoria County Career Services and Sir Sanford Fleming College to implement the Kawartha Lakes Skills Advance Ontario Program, substantially in the form as provided in Appendix B and C respectively to Report ED2020-027.

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

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

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

## **Background:**

In 2017, Council adopted the Kawartha Lakes Economic Development Strategy to support the Council goal of a Vibrant and Growing Economy. The Strategy was a people focused strategy, recognizing that the strengths of the local economy were built on the business owners, workforce and residents of the community. The strategy identified that the majority of new jobs in Kawartha Lakes will come from the expansion of existing businesses and five (5) established or emerging clusters were chosen to be the focus of economic development programs to promote business and job growth. Manufacturing and Agriculture and Food are two of those clusters. In both clusters, challenges to business growth is often tied to gaps in the workforce.

## **Skills Advance Ontario**

Skills Advance Ontario (SAO), a sector-focused workforce development pilot, partnerships that bring together sector-based employers with access to job-ready, skilled workers. These workers are provided with experiential development opportunities to help them obtain, succeed, and advance in employment.

In March 2020, the City of Kawartha Lakes received funding for a Kawartha Lakes Skills Advance Ontario (KL SAO) project for manufacturing and agriculture sectors (Appendix A). The program was developed in partnership with Fleming College and VCCS, and local sector related businesses. Due to COVID-19, the KL SAO program was delayed.

The KL SAO will support local manufacturing and agriculture employers to:

- a. Build a supply of skilled workers who can meet their workforce development needs by providing training services to improve employment performance;
- b. Reduce turnover and associated recruitment and training costs;
- c. Demonstrate their businesses commitment to workforce development, including advancement of existing or Incumbent Workers; and
- d. Form effective and dependable workforce development partnerships with the local training partners: Fleming College and VCCS.

The KL SAO will support the local workforce by providing:

- a. Sector-focused essential and technical skills training related to an occupation that offers sustainable and meaningful employment;
- b. Pre-employment and job readiness skills training, and on-the-job experience;
- c. New jobs and workforce development support in Manufacturing or Agriculture sectors;
- d. The ability to sustain or advance from their current employment.

There are two sector-focused skill training streams that will be delivered through the KL SAO:

1. Job Seeker:

Eligible Participants are currently unemployed, have had challenges maintaining long term employment, and have no post-secondary education can join into a six (6)-week pre-employment training program. This stream will provide training in pre-employment and work readiness skills as well as sector focused technical skills. In partnership with local employers, a job vacancy will be made available for graduates of this training stream and to support the onboarding process and the continued success of the new employee and employer, this program will provide up to one (1) year of wrap around supports and training, if need be.

2. Incumbent (Existing) Worker

This stream will provide skills training to existing employees currently working in either sector. Technical skills and essential skills training will be provided. This will support workforce development of existing employees by supporting the development of their credentials, experiences, and in the long term will support their continued employment and growth within their manufacturing or agriculture place of employment.

The SAO program was originally scheduled to begin April 1, 2020. However, due to Covid-19, the program was delayed until September 2020. In September 2020, a full time staff member was hired to lead the SAO Program. Since September 2020, the program has been in development and is scheduled to start the Incumbent training stream in December 2020, followed by the Job Seeker stream in January 2021.

The KL SAO program is aiming to provide essential and technical training to approximately 110 participants through the two training streams from December 2020 through to March 31, 2021. The first of three Job Seeker cohorts will start in January 2021, and will be followed by cohorts starting in February and March 2021. Simultaneously, the incumbent training stream will be made available to Employer's in December 2020 and will continue through to March 2021.

The two streams have been developed through collaboration and consultation with 11 sector related employers, Sir Sandford Fleming College and VCCS. As part of the delivery of the KL SAO, additional employers will be contacted in the new year to expand the program to other businesses in CKL; extending the support and reach of the KL SAO to additional local Manufacturing and Agriculture businesses.

**Rationale:**

The SAO program provides the local Kawartha Lakes labour force with pre-employment and work readiness training. It will also provide employed members

of our workforce with upskilling and additional training in the manufacturing and agriculture sectors. In order to initiate the delivery of the KL SAO, two Agreements must be signed with VCCS (Appendix B) and Sir Sandford Fleming College (Appendix C).

Training will be provided by Sir Sandford Fleming College and VCCS. Together they will be the training providers and will deliver the curriculums for both the Job Seeker and the Incumbent training streams.

VCCS will be responsible for the 6-week Job Seeker program. This includes supporting the Job Seeker Participant:

- Throughout the KL SAO recruitment process. This includes orientation and service planning for each individual.
- Sector-focused pre-employment services, including “soft skills training” and other pre-employment readiness training.
- Employment services, including Participant job matching with the local employers and vacant job positions.
- Ongoing Job Seeker participant case management for up to one year.

Fleming College will be the technical Skills trainer for both streams. As a trainer, Fleming College will:

- Provide essential and technical skills training for the 6-week Job Seeker and Incumbent workers streams
- Provide sector-focused training through the School of Trades and Technology, School of Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences, and the Continuing Education office
- Bring previous experience with SAO programming through their leadership of two other SAO programs

Staff recommends that the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute the service agreements attached as Appendix B and C on behalf of the Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes:

1. KL SAO Agreement with Victoria County Career Services
2. KL SAO Agreement with Sir Sandford Fleming College

### **Other Alternatives Considered:**

The Kawartha Lakes SAO has been developed in consultation with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development within the program guidelines and has clearly established deliverables in partnership with Fleming and VCCS. No other alternatives have been considered.

## **Alignment to Strategic Priorities**

This report aligns with three strategic priorities:

1. Good Government
2. A Vibrant and Growing Economy
3. An Exceptional Quality of Life

The Kawartha Lakes Skills Advance Program advances the City of Kawartha Lakes Council's vision of a thriving and growing communities within a healthy natural environment by strengthening local business stability and upskilling the local workforce.

In addition, this program specifically addresses the recommendations and multiple Action Plans outlined in the Kawartha Lakes Agriculture and Food Action Plan 2020-2024 Farmers to Consumers: Growing Success 2.0. The KL SAO program incorporated many of the Agriculture and Food Action Plan components into the program creation and design. The CKL has identified the agriculture sector as a "significant economic driver that contributes to the overall quality of life in the region, a variety of agriculture and agri-food related businesses also play an important role in the City's economy."

Overall, the KL SAO program is a financially independent and community developed resource for members of our community that require supportive training as an entry into long-term meaningful employment. While also supporting the workforce development of businesses and organizations of these two sectors.

### **Financial/Operation Impacts:**

The KL SAO is 100% funded through this Agreement between the Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development and the City of Kawartha Lakes. The total budget of this program is \$1,179,778.

The SAO Program funding supports the hiring of two full-time temporary staff to administer the program for the duration of the funding period, as well as financial supports available to other departments in the CKL that will support and assist with the programs development and administration (i.e. Legal, IT, HS).

This SAO program is funded to March 31, 2021. It is anticipated that a second application request will be made to extend the program funding for the 2021-2022 Provincial financial year.

## Consultations:

Manager, Economic Development  
City Solicitor  
Treasurer  
Sir Sandford Fleming College  
Victoria County Career Services (VCCS)

## Attachments:

Appendix A – Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement SkillsAdvance Ontario #40684 – Formal Agreement between the City of Kawartha Lakes and the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development for the SAO program.



2019-2021 SAO  
Agreement - City of

Appendix B – Service Agreement between VCCS and the City of Kawartha Lakes – agreement between the two organizations, outlining the roles and responsibilities of each party for this SAO Program



VCCS  
Agreement\_City of K

Appendix C – Service Agreement between Fleming College and the City of Kawartha Lakes – agreement between the two organizations, outlining the roles and responsibilities of each party for this SAO Program.



KL SAO\_Fleming  
College\_CKL\_Service

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