

Staff Memo

A message from Ron Taylor, CAO

Date: October 5, 2021

To: City Council

From: Ron Taylor

Re: Update - 2021 Pandemic Service Enhancements Pilot Program

Background

The Economic Recovery Task Force made a number of recommendations to council in 2020 and 2021 to accelerate the recovery of our local economy due to the pandemic. Some recommendations were considered through the City's 2021 budget process. Council approved up to \$200,000 in the 2021 budget to fund various City service enhancements to support pandemic response and recovery efforts in the community. Additionally, the City sought out grant funding where available, and realigned existing program budgets, to maximize these service enhancements.

This memorandum provides an update to Council of service enhancements implemented in 2021 (and not detailed in Report ED2021-035).

2021 Service Enhancements

Public Washrooms

All existing city-managed public washrooms were opened to the public earlier than traditionally opened, and several temporary "port-o-potties" were rented and distributed throughout the City (particularly within high use/traffic areas).

- The new Garnet Graham Park washroom facility opened June 28
- Library facilities in Lindsay and Fenelon Falls were open weekends (both Saturday and Sunday) to provide public washroom access and additional library access (with signage directing the public accordingly).



Waste Collection

Additional waste receptacles were purchased and located throughout the City, within high use/traffic areas (parks, boat launches, downtowns, for example). Both staff resources and contracted services increased frequency of collections.

The City continued throughout 2021 an increased three bag limit curbside collection for residents.

Summer Tourism Experience Program

The Summer tourism season is vital to the sustainability of local tourism businesses and the Kawartha Lakes economy. In 2020- 2021, the Kawartha Lakes Economic Recovery Task Force identified opportunities to support the 2021 resilience of the local tourism industry through enhancing the visitor experience including; summer student tourism ambassadors enhancing the visitor experience.

In recognition of the important work local Chambers of Commerce provide in visitor information services, the Kawartha Lakes Summer Tourism Experience Program 2021 supported Chambers of Commerce in Kawartha Lakes to enhance the visitor experience across the municipality. The program provided up to \$15,000 for activities that advance community based visitor information services and met the following objectives;

- Welcomed visitors to Kawartha Lakes (be physically out in the community where tourists gather)
- Encouraged visitors to increase their length of stay in Kawartha Lakes by supporting on the ground trip planning and encourage visitation to multiple tourism assets
- Provided activities or interactions that enhance the visitors experience while in Kawartha Lakes.

All four Chambers of Commerce in Kawartha Lakes participated in the program and exceeded the intentions of the program. The projects are as follows:

Bobcaygeon & Area Chamber of Commerce: Funding approved up to \$14,988.75 to hire summer students, create and utilize a Bobcaygeon and Kawartha Lakes outdoor experience booth with activations.



Coboconk, Norland & Area Chamber of Commerce: Funding approved up to \$14,800 to hire two summer students to be out in the community, develop a new 'virtual tourism' components on a refreshed website, and create a social media strategy to support the virtual tourism project that will lead to in-person visitation.

Fenelon Falls & District Chamber of Commerce: Funding approved up to \$15,000 to hire summer students, outdoor tent for a tourism office, and continue engagement with fall/ winter social media promotions.

Lindsay + District Chamber of Commerce: Funding approved up to \$14,886.00 to hire two (2) summer students to act as tourism ambassadors, outdoor visitor information kiosk with activations, and COVID Rapid Testing administration to support local businesses establish consumer confidence.

Summer Students from the Chambers of Commerce supported the inaugural Kawartha Lakes Business Count project by surveying businesses in their respective communities. The project was a great success thanks to their participation. A detailed report on the project will be coming to Council before the end of the year.

The 2021 Summer Tourism Experience program will conclude December 31, 2021, with the majority of activities taking place during the Summer 2021 season.

Relief from Approval and Processing Fees

Council provided relief to various fees, charges and approvals:

- Patios on public lands - Licenses issued proactively with cost relief extended
- Patios on private lands - Temporary patios approved through streamlined processes and zoning relief
- Fee relief extended to park & amenity, and special event permits
- Council waived the requirement for community matching funds through the City's "50/50" Community Project Capital Fund, and extended this relief into 2022 (and for the Beautification portion of the CPDF Program).

Public Facilities and Amenities

- All splashpads were open for summer months, including a new facility at Logie Park
- The Armoury was designated and readied as an alternative cooling centre (typically Lindsay Recreation Complex and Coboconk Service Centre).
- Summer Camp operations resumed, as did various recreation facilities
- Playground amenities were readied and opened for early use
- Grant monies were secured to accelerate and replace equipment in 2021 – playground structure replacements at Garnet Graham Park and Victoria Road Park, sport court installation at Janetville/Terry Staples Park
- Boat launch improvements were accelerated in 2021 – Head Lake, Elliott Falls and Coulson Park Boat launches design work is complete and work will be implemented in late 2021/early 2022
- Lindsay Trail System – Wilson Fields – this project consists of the installation of a new, multi-use and accessible trail through and around Wilson Fields West – design is complete and work will be implemented in Spring of 2022
- 4 Municipal Service Centres have all been opened, with varying hours of operation

Winter Maintenance in Downtowns

- Enhanced winter maintenance and service was provided in downtowns, and including enhanced sidewalk clearing and municipal parking lots.

All of the above-noted service enhancements were implemented, with overwhelming positive feedback, and under budget. Staff will review and reconcile the budget at year-end.