



Committee of the Whole Report

Report Number: ED2021-035
Meeting Date: October 5, 2021
Title: Economic Recovery Task Force Review
Description: A review of the activities of the Economic Recovery Task Force
Author and Title: Rebecca Mustard, Manager of Economic Development

Recommendations:

That Report ED2021-035 Economic Recovery Task Force Review be received;

That the Economic Recovery Task Force be dissolved and the Task Force members Bjorn Alfredsson, Tom Phillips, Jill Quast, and Mark Wilson be thanked for their contribution; and

That these recommendations be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

(Acting) Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

At the Council meeting of May 26, 2020, Council adopted the following resolution:

CR2020-124

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;

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.

The Economic Recovery Taskforce was established to provide advice and recommendations to Council and Staff on resources and support to stimulate local economic recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Task Force provided strategic advice and guidance to the three strategic focus areas;

- i. Critical infrastructure investments: Refinement, prioritization and promotion of critical infrastructure projects that will stimulate construction and job creation including; active municipal and 3rd party construction projects; potential upcoming construction work; development driven construction;
- ii. Planning and Development Stimulus: Advance a focused approach to a streamlined execution of development policy and approvals for shovel ready planning and development projects to stimulate private sector construction and residential and non-residential growth;
- iii. Business Recovery and Support; Survey of local businesses to understand the Kawartha Lakes business experience, and identify gaps in current funding and support programs, and propose initiatives to address immediate and future challenges to support business recovery with a specific focus in agriculture

and food, arts/culture/heritage, innovation, manufacturing, and tourism clusters.

The Economic Recovery Task Force began meeting in June 2020 to execute the Terms of Reference (Appendix A). Throughout 2020, a number of recommendations from the Economic Recovery Task Force were brought to Council to support the immediate and timely response and recovery of local business and economy.

At the Council meeting of November 17, 2020, Council received Report ED2020-023, which provided an overview of actions to that time and presented the Economic Recovery Task Force Action Plan: Transformational Change (Attachment B), and adopted the following resolution:

CW2020-164

That Report ED2020-23, Economic Recovery Task Force Recommendations, be received;

That permit fees for park use, patios and events in 2021 be waived, with forecasted reduced revenue identified in the 2021 budget;

That the downtown Fenelon Falls reconstruction project be included as a decision unit in the 2021 capital budget;

That an increase in garbage cans and frequency of waste pick up in our downtowns and major parks be costed and included as a decision unit in the 2021 budget;

That portable washrooms and associated directional signage in our downtowns and parks be costed and included as a decision unit in the 2021 budget;

That accelerated investment in our boat launches and trails for improved access and enjoyment be costed and included as a decision unit in the 2021 budget;

That Council supports the work of EORN and EOWC for the Eastern Ontario "1 GIG" proposal for increased broadband capacity;

That Council directs staff to develop a cultural sector recovery grant program for 2021, which could be applied to operating costs for our arts and culture community, and report back to council on the scope of the program by end of Q1 2021;

That Council approves a modified extension to the Kawartha Lakes Innovation Cluster Pilot program until December 31, 2021, through in-kind support to provide specific support for high growth businesses; and

That Council endorses the Economic Recovery Task Force Action Plan as provided in Appendix A to this report.

Carried

The Economic Recovery Task Force Action Plan: Transformational Change included input from the Kawartha Lakes COVID-19 Business survey (502 responses), local business organizations, sector based working group sessions held between June and September 2020, and the Jump-In online engagement platform.

This report provides a review of the activities of the Task Force following the November 17, 2020, Council Report and recommends that, having completed the duties in the Terms of Reference, the Task Force be dissolved and members thanked for their contribution.

Rationale:

An overview of the recommendations from the Economic Recovery Task Force Action Plan: Transformational Change, and preceding recommendations to Council with updates since November 17, 2020, are noted below:

Focus Area: Critical Infrastructure Investments

- Downtown Fenelon Falls and Downtown Lindsay Phase 3 reconstruction projects were approved in the 2021 Capital Budget, and both projects are currently underway - CW2020-116.
- Funding for additional boat launches was approved in the 2021 Capital Budget and work is underway, or scheduled to be completed when permits are received - CW 2020-164.
- A focus on the continued development and promotion of trails is included in the Destination Development Plan (Tourism Strategy) approved by Council in 2021. Additional strategic work to further support the continued development of trails for improved access and enjoyment is currently underway through the Trails Master Plan and Active Transportation Master Plan.
- Council continues to support the work of EORN and EOWC for the Eastern Ontario "1 GIG" broadband project to improve access for homes and businesses

across Kawartha Lakes. The municipality has also provided a number of letters of support to private sector business funding applications to expanding service - CW 2020-164.

Focus Area: Planning and Development Stimulus

- The Concierge Pilot Program was a 9-month pilot program for development applications in the site plan process with an identifiable impact on local economic development and growth. The pilot concluded in July 2021 with seven (7) planning applications taking part in the program. A report will be forthcoming to Planning Advisory Committee by the end of Q4, 2021, with recommendations to streamline private sector economic development driven applications.
- The Task Force recommended that the Planning Division create a spreadsheet as a means of tracking the status of all development applications. The spreadsheet has been created and assists senior staff with project management, and to provide timely status update reports on projects and applications to planning advisory committee, council, proponents/applicants and the public.
- The Development Services and Engineering & Assets Departments have prioritized, and been working on, approvals and implementation of a number of larger residential and commercial “shovel-ready” projects to act as a construction stimulus within the City.

Focus Area: Business Recovery and Support

- Permit fees for park use, patios and events were waived in 2021 to encourage creative pandemic safe alternatives for supporting business and community activities - CW 2020-164.
- Supporting the summer tourism season, several service enhancements were put in place for 2021 including an increased number and pick up of garbage cans, availability of washrooms and signage, and summer tourism ambassadors in downtowns and major parks (See Appendix C) - CW 2020-164.
- The Arts, Culture and Heritage Recovery Fund was established in Q1, 2020, to support cultural not-for-profit organizations located within the municipality to help cover eligible fixed operating costs incurred by cultural facilities in 2020. Council distributed \$149,081.90 to 10 cultural organizations, geographically distributed across the municipality. Staff are currently developing a framework for ongoing support for the Cultural sector based on the Cultural Master Plan - CR2021-020, CW2021-104.

- The Action Plan recommendation in November 2020 was that a long term funding framework for cultural organizations be considered as part of the 2022 budget. However, since that time, a number of other initiatives are underway that may shape the needs of cultural organizations. The two most significant initiatives being the Cultural Centre Feasibility Study that is currently underway with a report scheduled for June, 2022, and the hiring of an Economic Development Officer- Curatorial Services to support the municipal collection of three dimensional (3D) artifacts and community owned collections. Staff will bring forward a framework for Council's consideration in 2022 when the outcome of these initiatives is better known.
- The Million Dollar Makeover (Community Improvement Plan (CIP)) programs were reviewed and application intakes were in December 2020, February 2021, May 2021. A report outlining the outcomes of the program as well as grant and loan recipients is forthcoming in Q4, 2021 - CR2020-203.
- Kawartha Lakes Innovation Cluster Pilot program to support accelerated growth of high growth businesses was extended until December 31, 2021. The program has operated virtually since that time due to pandemic restrictions with a strong desire from program participants to return to the space. A detailed report will be forthcoming to Council in Q4, 2021 - CW2020-164.

Other Alternatives Considered:

No other alternatives have been considered.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

The Economic Recovery Task Force and Action Plan supports the 2020-2023 Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan priority of A Vibrant and Growing Economy by directly addressing and mitigating, where possible, the local impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Financial/Operation Impacts:

Actions included in this report do not have financial requests being made through this report. All of the mentioned recovery initiatives and programs have contributed greatly to accelerating recovery of our local economy.

Consultations:

Economic Recovery Task Force
Chief Administrative Officer

Acting Director of Development Services
Manager of Parks, Recreation, and Culture

Attachments:

Appendix A: Kawartha Lakes Economic Recovery Task Force Terms of Reference



ED2021-035
Appendix A.pdf

Appendix B: Economic Recovery Task Force Action Plan: Transformational Change



ED2021-035
Appendix B.pdf

Appendix C: Memo regarding 2021 Service Enhancements



2021 Pandemic
Recovery Service Enh:

(Acting) Department Head email: rholy@kawarthalakes.ca

Department Head: Richard Holy, (Acting) Director of Development Services