



Council Report

Report Number:	ED2022-024
Meeting Date:	March 22, 2022
Title:	Skills Development Fund 2 Projects
Description:	Request to sign agreements related to Skills Development Fund 2 projects
Author and Title:	Rebecca Mustard, Manager of Economic Development

Recommendations:

That Report ED2022-024, **Skills Development Fund 2 Projects**, be received;

That the Mayor and Clerk, following a review of agreements to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor, be authorised to execute all required documents, agreement(s), and extensions with the Province of Ontario and Sir Sandford Fleming College relating to the Skills Development Fund 2 project titled Sustainable Food Systems and Urban Forestry Credentials; and

That the Mayor and Clerk, following a review of agreements to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor, be authorised to execute all required documents, agreement(s), and extensions with the Province of Ontario, Trent University, Peterborough and the Kawarthas Economic Development, and Workforce Development Board relating to the Skills Development Fund 2 project titled Community-Campus Engagement for Rural Degree Holders in Peterborough and City of Kawartha Lakes.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

In September 2021, the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTD) announced a new round of Skills Development Fund (SDF) funding of \$83.3million to support projects that will enable market-driven solutions and unlock the economic potential of skilled trades and broader workforce development initiatives to facilitate economic recovery.

This is the second round of SDF funding to be announced. The municipality and project partner, Sir Sandford Fleming College received funding in the first round of SDF funding for a simulator and training project targeting the agriculture, construction, forestry, and public works sectors.

In this second round of SDF funding, two partnership based applications were submitted. One with Sir Sandford Fleming College titled Sustainable Food Systems and Urban Forestry Credentials, and another with Trent University and Peterborough and the Kawarthas Economic Development titled Community-Campus Engagement for Rural Degree Holders in Peterborough and City of Kawartha Lakes.

This report requests that, should submitted applications be successful, Council enter into agreements with the Province and respective funding partners to execute the approved projects.

Rationale:

Both projects are eligible for the SDF program and are 100% funded by the Province. They were designed with project partners to address immediate and strategic opportunities to provide skills training, and support engagement in the local workforce. Each project is proposed with a one-year timeline, which is the maximum project duration eligible in the SDF program. A summary of each project is below:

Sustainable Food Systems and Urban Forestry Credentials Proposal

This project is a partnership with Fleming College. The project will support the development of micro-credentials for the Agricultural and Urban Forestry sector. Micro-credentials are skill based courses that can be stacked to obtain a College Board certificate. Training modules will be developed in consultation with industry and the short duration of training will allow a quick response to a changing labour market and allow workers to upgrade and develop their skills to improve employability, advance their career, retain employment and address critical employer or community needs.

Community-Campus Engagement for Rural Degree Holders in Peterborough and City of Kawartha Lakes Proposal

This project is a partnership with Trent University and Peterborough and the Kawarthas Economic Development. The project will develop, expand and formalize networks in support of a resilient workforce by connecting recent and emerging graduates as they become job seekers with local employers across the City and County of Peterborough and the City of Kawartha Lakes. The project will target the creation of 60 multi-year partnership agreements between Trent University and the employer community, targeting 100 recent graduates seeking employment in the region. Eligible program participants will receive funding to support training, onboarding, and transitioning to the workplace.

Both project proposals were submitted in Q1, 2022. Staff are waiting to hear the outcome of both proposals. Under the program requirements, projects are required to start before April 2, 2022, and conclude within one year of commencement. This requires funding agreements between the municipality and the Province to be executed before March 31, 2022, should either or both application be successful.

Other Alternatives Considered:

Both project proposals provide opportunities to support economic recovery and strengthen collaborative programming with key post secondary institutions. As the SDF program is 100% funded, municipal costs to administer the program funding agreements are covered. As such, no alternatives have been considered.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

The SDF project proposals support the 2022-2023 Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan priority:

- A Vibrant and Growing Economy

The projects address workforce challenges in the local economy and also develop strategic collaborative partnerships with key institutions in the region.

Further, the Kawartha Lakes Economic Development Strategy supports the retention of youth in the community which is the focus of the Trent University proposal. The Strategy also seeks to encourage a collaborative environment which is delivered through developing working partnerships with both institutions to achieve outcomes of mutual benefit.

Financial/Operation Impacts:

The Skills Development Fund is a fully funded program. The Sustainable Food Systems and Urban Forestry Credentials Proposal requests funding of \$774,486.73.

Administrative costs related to the management of the funding agreement are included in the project budget with no implication to the tax base.

The Community-Campus Engagement for Rural Degree Holders in Peterborough and City of Kawartha Lakes Proposal requests funding of \$773,722. This project also includes funds to cover administrative costs incurred by the project as well as funds to hire staff to execute the project deliverables. These Staff will be shared between the City of Kawartha Lakes, Trent University and Peterborough and the Kawarthas Economic Development to ensure coordinated activities with existing programming. If approved, the project will be fully funded by the Province.

Consultations:

City Solicitor
Trent University
Sir Sandford Fleming College

Attachments:

N/A

Department Head email: rholy@kawarthalakes.ca

Department Head: Richard Holy, Director of Development Services