

The Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes
Council Report

Report Number ED2017-014

Date: July 11, 2017
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Place: Council Chambers

Ward Community Identifier: All

Subject: Economic Development Strategy Presentation

Author Name and Title: Rebecca Mustard, Manager of Economic Development

Recommendation:

RESOLVED THAT Report ED2017-014, **Economic Development Strategy Presentation**, be received.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

In 2016, the City of Kawartha Lakes Council adopted a new Corporate Strategic Plan. Three strategic goals are identified in the Strategy, with the first directly related to Economic Development, A Vibrant and Growing Economy. To work towards this, Council identified the creation and execution of a comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to diversify the local economy, bring more businesses to the City of Kawartha Lakes and to expand local employment.

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the direction of the draft Economic Development Strategy and provide an opportunity for Council input and discussion (presentation to be made).

Rationale:

The Economic Development Strategy project was initiated in 2016 has been broken into four phases:

1. Research and Analysis
2. Community Engagement
3. Strategy Development
4. Implementation and Measurement

A consulting firm, Tenzing, was hired through a competitive Request for Proposal process to work collaboratively with the City's Economic Development team to develop the Strategy. Tenzing was hired in November, 2016, and has been involved in phases 1-3.

Phases 1 and 2 were undertaken between November 2016 and May 2017. Phase 1, Research and Analysis included an overall review of existing City strategies, policies, and activities of the Economic Development Division and an economic analysis of the local economy. In addition, relevant external documents that influence local economic development such as the Ontario East Economic Development Strategy and a review of best practices were also conducted.

Phase 2, Community Engagement, comprised of a broad based survey and stakeholder consultations. The broad based survey received 298 responses and was available on the City and Economic Development websites and a paper version was also available at municipal Service Centres. In addition to the public survey, stakeholder consultations were targeted to community business organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce and the Lindsay BIA, business owners and other government economic development bodies. Approximately 50 people participated in these sessions from across the City.

The information gathered in Phases 1 and 2 were used to develop the Economic Development Strategy direction as follows.

Economic Development Strategy Direction

The Economic Development Strategy direction addresses challenges and opportunities to diversifying the economy, attracting business and expanding local employment.

1. City of Kawartha Lakes approach

The City of Kawartha Lakes is a geographically diverse area with many communities with unique needs. To serve our communities best, the City should act as one City, benefiting from economies of scale. This means communicating as one City, creating a brand and marketing message and organizing resources at a City wide scale with local implementation.

2. Nurturing clusters

A cluster describes like businesses that benefit from being together. For example, when goat farmers and cheese producers are located in the same area, they grow goat cheese industry in new ways. There are business clusters in Kawartha Lakes that can grow. The strategy proposes to focus the majority economic development efforts in five key clusters; agriculture and food production, tourism, arts and culture, specialized manufacturing, and engineered products and related services. The objective of this pillar is to help expand existing businesses leading to new jobs and buildings, and attract new businesses in these sectors.

3. Aligning & inspiring City resources

A significant amount of work is underway to improve the City's Development process through the Planning Approvals Task Force recommendations. The objective of this pillar is to make municipal policies and procedures easier for business to navigate by creating a team-based approach to business attraction and development. It is also about critical infrastructure projects to accommodate growth and investment in a competitive and efficient manner.

4. Energizing our business culture

The opportunity to improve the business culture within the City and broader Kawartha Lake business community was well articulated at stakeholder consultations. The majority of job growth comes from existing businesses. The objective of this pillar is to gather the business community together, with efforts focused on the five key clusters, to help business and the clusters grow. It is also about working with local business focused organizations on downtown and community economic development improvements. We all need to work together as ambassadors to positively foster a vibrant economy.

5. Retain, repatriate and attract

The population of Kawartha Lakes is growing, and will continue to do so with new housing development and growth forecasts. What is evident from

demographics is that the population is naturally aging faster than the provincial average. People retire as they age; therefore there is a need to attract a generation of business owners and employees to support the local economy. The objective of this pillar is to intentionally encourage Kawartha Lakes 'alumni', from Fleming College and our own community, to come home and build a life in the City.

The Economic Development Strategy direction narrows the focus of the Economic Development Division to focus on helping businesses start up, grow, stay and locate in Kawartha Lakes through developing thriving clusters. While businesses in all sectors will continue to be supported, the focus of programming will be on the five key industries where existing strengths can be built on and entire clusters developed.

The Economic Development Strategy also provides an Economic Development perspective to the City's upcoming branding and marketing project that will be led by the Communications, Advertising and Marketing Division.

Next steps

The Economic Development Division is working to align programs and budgets to the proposed Economic Development Strategy. This includes the projects, actions and measurable outcomes that will be shared with Council through a yearly update report. It is anticipated that the final Economic Development Strategy will be brought before Council for adoption in August, 2017.

Other Alternatives Considered:

Council may choose an alternative direction for the Economic Development Strategy; however it is the recommendation of Staff that this approach is a solid foundation for the City's Economic Development Program. It focuses staff time and resources to specific activities and provides a framework for all departments to support the growth of the economy.

Financial/Operation Impacts:

The Economic Development Strategy costs were included in the 2016 and 2017 budgets. Additional funds have been earmarked in the 2017 Economic Development budget to begin the implementation of the Strategy and subsequent projects that require additional funding to the general Economic Development budget in future years will be presented to Council for consideration.

Relationship of Recommendation to the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan:

This report deals directly with Goal 1 A Vibrant and Growing Economy by implementing a Council action plan priority.

Consultations:

Business owners, agricultural community, and general public across the City of Kawartha Lakes.

Local business organizations including; Bobcaygeon and Area Chamber of Commerce, Coboconk and Norland and Area Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Lindsay BIA, Fenelon Falls and Area Chamber of Commerce, Fenelon Forward, Impact 32, Lindsay and District Chamber of Commerce.

Economic development organizations; BDC, Kawartha Lakes CFDC, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Economic Development and Growth, Trent Severn Waterway, Regional Tourism Organization 8, VCCS, Workforce Development Board.

Manager of Communications, Advertising and Marketing

Attachments:

None

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Department Head: Chris Marshall, Director of Development Services

Department File: A17