

Committee Report

To:	Chair Davenport, Chair Siegwart and Committee Members
Committee Date:	December 15, 2020
Subject / Report No:	EDTC-ED-02-21
Title:	2021 Workplan Priorities and Staffing
Prepared by:	Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Culture
Reviewed by:	Kim Wingrove, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All
Status:	

Recommendation

1. That Report EDTC-ED-02-21 regarding 2021 Economic Development and Tourism Priorities and Staffing be received for information; and
2. That operational priorities of investment, attraction and retention and entrepreneurship, along with staffing changes be adopted as presented for consideration by Council through the 2021 budget process.

Executive Summary

The economic development and tourism department is currently developing its 2021 workplan. Staffing reallocation and priority adjustments realized throughout the pandemic have been incorporated into the proposed workplan to ensure corporate strategic goals are met while also enabling greater local and regional alignment.

Background and Discussion

Alongside the business community who has been learning and adapting throughout the pandemic, the Economic Development, Tourism & Culture (EDTC) department took the same opportunity to refocus and trial new approaches. Through this exercise, significant advantages were realized and staff are recommending these changes now be made permanent. Most prominent are the staffing adjustments.

Staffing Adjustments

Near the beginning of the pandemic, staff were reallocated to newly focused teams pairing business and communications needs with staff expertise and knowledge. As a result, the communications department was bolstered to enable the prompt sharing of facts, regular communications and enhanced local marketing. Tourism was embedded in economic development to respond quickly to changing industry needs, enhance one-on-one business supports and focus on infrastructure investment.

Given the positive outcomes of these adjustments, staff determined it is in the best interest of our businesses, stakeholders and community to continue this trajectory. There will be no reduction in service. Rather, staff will be more supported and better enabled by a broader cross-functional team.

This will result in the following departmental staffing structure changes:

- 1 Tourism Marketing & Communications Specialist to be reallocated to the Communications Departmental budget
- 1 Grey Roots Media & Communications Coordinator to be reallocated to the Communications Departmental budget
- 1 Tourism Partner and Media Relations Specialist to be reallocated to the Economic Development Departmental budget

These changes will also allow staff to engage in a careful transition to closely integrate economic development, tourism and communications in preparation for the retirement of long-time Tourism Manager, Bryan Plumstead on December 31, 2021.

Staff have drafted the 2021 budget based on these recommended staffing structure changes, which do not result in any overall funding changes. Additional staffing has also been included in the Communications budget to offset parental leaves that have been budgeted to occur in the Communications and Economic Development departments in 2021.

Priorities & Workplan

The 2021 Economic Development and Tourism priorities and workplan have been developed in consult with the Economic Development & Tourism Working Group. Recommendations were gathered from the local level and community partners to identify where resources are best allocated. Staff firmly support these recommendations, see demonstrated alignment with the corporate strategic goals and therefore put forth the following for the 2021 departmental priorities and workplan.

Investment Staff Leads: Steve, Bryan, Philly, Alison	Foreign Direct Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDI Strategy • FDI Training for local officials • Regional Airport Study • Talisman • TC Energy • Abattoir
	Community Improvement Plans (CIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation & Tracking • Living on Main Street • Business Mix Analysis
	Tourism Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder Alignment • Cycling & Trails Implementation • Site Development – parking, washrooms, signage
	Product & Experience Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made in Grey (Agri-Food) • Tourism Matters • Shop Local • Consumer Confidence
	Shovel Ready Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable & Attainable Housing • Accommodations • Municipal Infrastructure
Attraction & Retention Staff Leads: Jacinda, Melissa	Local Immigration Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership Delivery • Diversity & Inclusion Training
	Attraction & Retention Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare: Long-term Care & Georgian Partnership – training and promotion • Skilled Trades: OYAP & Georgian Partnership – training and promotion
	Connect2Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the website as a one-stop-shop • Embed on municipal sites
	Sydenham Campus Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with YMCA, Georgian College & Local Employers
Entrepreneurship (BEC & Catapult) Staff Leads: Courtney, Taylor	Mentorship & Advisorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounding Board Program • Fast Lane Plus • Starter Company & Summer Company • T3 Accelerator
	Consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start Up (BEC) • Scaling (Catapult)

Underpinning all these actions is a digital first strategy as staff, businesses and the community continue to navigate the pandemic. Tradeshows, events and in person meetings are expected to be paused still in 2021. Given the growing demand online, staff will focus resources towards enhancing our digital presence through mapping, promotions and apps where possible. Consultations will maintain a virtual component to aid small businesses from their location.

In order to support this digital first strategy, staff are excited to see the SWIFT projects for Grey and Bruce moving forward. Stable, reliable broadband connection is critical to enabling this pivot long term.

Programming and leasing Sydenham Campus is also a top priority for staff. During the pandemic, staff are exercising caution and limiting the number of tenants and public in the building to ensure proper distancing and protocols. In preparation for easing restrictions through 2021, staff will actively network and market to enable the Campus to realize its vision.

In addition to the priorities outlined above, staff will continue to participate in several committees and task forces, taking action on items as they arise. Currently, EDTC staff participate in the following committees and task forces:

Grey County

- Economic Development & Planning Advisory Committee
- Tourism Advisory Committee
- Affordable Housing Task Force
- Hanover Owen Sound Task Force
- Ag Advisory Committee

Regional

- Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Regional Economic Development Roundtable
- Tri-County Partnership (Bruce, Grey, Huron) with Bruce Power, OCNI and NII
- TC Energy Community Roundtable

These priorities and projects do not discount the ongoing activities staff will continue to pursue such as responding to business retention inquiries, investment readiness training and protocols, updating business listings, implementing and growing Sydenham Campus, regional collaboration, nuclear attraction and the marketing and promotion of Grey through the Made in Grey and Visit Grey platforms.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

There are no legal or legislated requirements relating to this report.

Financial and Resource Implications

All operational priorities and staffing have been included in the 2021 budget for Council consideration.

Relevant Consultation

- ☐ Internal – Economic Development and Tourism staff, Communications staff, Finance staff, Director of Corporate Services, CAO
- ☐ External – Economic Development & Tourism Working Group

Appendices and Attachments

None.