



## The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Chief Administrative Officer

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Margaret Misek-Evans, Chief Administrative Officer

**Date to Council:** July 14, 2020

**Report Number:** CAO-2020-05

**Subject:** Rural Economic Development Program Funding

---

### Recommendations

It is recommended:

**That** Report CAO-2020-05 Rural Economic Development (RED) Program Funding, **be received;**

**And that** the Mayor and Clerk **be authorized** to sign the contribution agreement to release funding for the project.

### Background

On May 10, 2019, the Ontario Government announced it was revitalizing the Rural Economic Development (RED) program, which would begin intake on July 29, 2019. The deadline to apply for funding under the program was September 9, 2019. The program is a cost-share grant that supports activities that create strong rural communities in Ontario. The funding assistance is aimed at addressing barriers to economic development, attracting and retaining jobs and investment, and enhancing economic growth. It also invests in rural communities to help diversify and grow local economies. RED is administered by Ontario's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).

Eligible applicants include municipalities, not-for-profits, Indigenous communities or organizations, and local services boards.

The RED program supports projects in two streams:

- **Economic Diversification and Competitiveness Stream:** Projects that remove barriers to business and job growth, attract investment, attract or retain a skilled

workforce or strengthen sector and regional partnerships and diversify regional economies. The Ontario government provides up to 50% of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$150,000.

- **Strategic Economic Infrastructure Stream:** Minor capital projects that advance economic development and investment opportunities. The Ontario government provides up to 30% of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$250,000. Eligible costs for the program include project management professional fees, wages for new hires, minor capital costs, software, training, marketing and rental fees.

The Town submitted an application to the RED Program in late 2019 for a Business Retention and Expansion Program but was unsuccessful in the application.

On January 20, 2020, at the Rural Municipal Association 2020 Conference, Premier Ford announced that the Government of Ontario was opening a second intake for the program with a deadline of February 21, 2020.

## Comments

The Town applied for the RED program in February 2020 under the Economic Diversification and Competitiveness Stream to modernize and streamline the Building Department's Permitting system through digitization, which the department has been looking to implement for some time. The Town's application was successful, on the condition that a signed contribution agreement be provided to OMAFRA. Upon satisfying requirements for the contribution agreement, a formal announcement of the project will take place.

The project will include digitizing files, providing opportunities for online applications and having hardware (iPads) for Town Inspectors to reduce the time it takes to process applications and permits. The project is expected to reduce red tape, better coordinate permit approvals and provide efficiencies in the entire permitting process. This is especially important at this time during the COVID-19 pandemic to reduce the need for public interface.

## Consultations

Chief Administrative Officer  
Financial Services

## Financial Implications

The Town will be required to provide 50% of funding for eligible costs and 100% funding for ineligible costs, which would be taken from the Lifecycle – Strategic Priorities Fund. These funds are expected to be spent in the later part of the 2020 fiscal year with final billing potentially in early 2021 depending on completion.

## Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2019-22 Strategic Priorities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Make the Town of Tecumseh an even better place to live, work and invest through a shared vision for our residents and newcomers.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that Tecumseh's current and future growth is built upon the principles of sustainability and strategic decision-making.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrate the principles of health and wellness into all of Tecumseh's plans and priorities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steward the Town's "continuous improvement" approach to municipal service delivery to residents and businesses.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate the Town's leadership role in the community by promoting good governance and community engagement, by bringing together organizations serving the Town and the region to pursue common goals.

## Communications

Not applicable ☒

Website ☐

Social Media ☐

News Release ☐

Local Newspaper ☐

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared by:

Lesley Reeves  
Manager Strategic Initiatives

Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Administrative Officer

<b>Attachment Number</b>	<b>Attachment Name</b>
None	None