



Report n° ECDEV2024-001

Date: 02/07/2024

Submitted by: Ali Riel, Economic Development Officer

Subject: Economic Development Pilot Project

Nature/Goal

The purpose of this report is to provide Municipal Council with an overview of a proposed Economic Development pilot project from the Community Development Department.

Directive/Previous policy

N/A

Department's recommendation

WHEREAS the Economic Development division is now at a pivotal point in its road map to economic sustainability. The Community Development Department Staff are proposing a pilot project for the Economic Development division to hire a support position in the form of Administrative Coordinator – Economic Development and Tourism for a period of two years.

WHEREAS during the 2024 Budget Process \$150,000 was approved and allocated to be put towards the city's new Community Improvement Plan program and as the CIP program is still under development and will not be finalized until Fall 2024. Community Development Staff are recommending the funds be reallocated to the salary of the Administrative Coordinator – Economic Development and Tourism for a two-year period.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council approves the Economic Development pilot project for the hiring of an Administrative Coordinator – Economic Development and Tourism for a period of two years.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council approves the reallocation of funds in the amount of \$150,000 from the 2024 budget Economic Development Revenues that was to support the launch of the city's new Community Development Plan (CIP) program to the salary of an Administrative Coordinator – Economic Development and Tourism for a period of two years.

ATTENDU QUE la division Développement économique se trouve maintenant à un moment important sur notre chemin vers la durabilité économique. Le personnel du Service de développement communautaire propose un projet pilote pour la division Développement économique afin d'embaucher un poste de soutien sous la forme de Coordonnateur administratif – Développement économique et tourisme pour une période de deux ans.

ATTENDU QUE lors du processus budgétaire 2024, 150 000 \$ ont été approuvés et alloués au nouveau programme de plan d'amélioration communautaire de la cité. Le programme PAC est encore en cours d'élaboration et ne sera finalisé qu'à l'automne 2024, le personnel du développement communautaire recommande que les fonds soient réaffectés au salaire du coordonnateur administratif – Développement économique et tourisme pour une période de deux ans.

IL EST RÉSOLU QUE le comité plénier recommande au conseil d'approuver le projet pilote de développement économique visant l'embauche d'un coordonnateur administratif – développement économique et tourisme pour une période de deux ans.

IL EST RÉSOLU QUE le comité plénier recommande au conseil d'approuver la réaffectation de fonds d'un montant de 150 000 \$ provenant des revenus de développement économique du budget 2024 pour soutenir le lancement du nouveau programme de plan de développement communautaire (PIC) de la ville au salaire d'un coordonnateur administratif – développement économique et du tourisme pour une durée de deux ans.

Background

The Economic Development division works as part of the Community Development Department in bringing the department's mission to life by providing quality community focused services and diverse leisure opportunities that bring people together, encourage growth and economic development

In April 2022, Municipal Council approved the City's current economic development strategy. The Economic Development Strategy's key strategic directions were developed to encourage the city to build on its strengths while focusing on opportunities that will open doors for economic success in the future.

The Economic Development Strategy's three Strategic Directions are:

- **Business Service Excellence**
Through the objectives and actions of this strategic direction the city will work to provide exemplary services and programs to residents,

businesses, and investors. Some examples of how this will be accomplished:

- Establish a Business, Retention and Expansion Program
- Establish an Economic Development Committee
- Reactivate the City's Community Improvement Plan
- Increase Inventory of available serviced properties
- Facilitate unique, local, specialty hospitality and retail developments.

- **Rural Economic Diversity**

By looking outwards to the rural areas of Clarence-Rockland attention can be focused on the Agricultural sector to help grow the economic potential of our municipality. This will be done by:

- Encouraging rural economic diversity
- Exploring rural and agritourism opportunities
- Encouraging local food production and consumption

- **Vibrant Places and Spaces**

The City of Clarence-Rockland provides both rural and urban settings in the six communities of this region. Each of these communities can play a part in contributing to the economic prosperity of our city. The focus of this strategic direction will be to:

- Encourage development of waterfront spaces through the creation of a waterfront master plan.
- Pursue the opportunity to develop a Community Hub District

CITY OF CLARENCE-ROCKLAND STRATEGIC PLAN (2024 – 2028)

In 2023, the process of creating a new strategic plan for the City of Clarence-Rockland was started. The city's new strategic plan was approved by council in the Spring of 2024.

Within each of the three strategic directions of the city's new strategic plan it is evident that economic development is clearly viewed as an integral priority for the city to meet its commitment to achieving sustainable and balanced growth over the course of the next four years. Throughout the city's new strategic plan clear links can be made to the work that is on the horizon for the Economic Development division.

Balance Growth

Leverage and integrate the City's authorities, plans, and services to shape the growth of the municipality.

- Community Improvement Plan
- Tourism Strategy
- Waterfront Master Plan
- Strategy for development of Secondary Plan Lands

Create opportunities for dialogue between the city, residents, and the private sector on major development initiatives.

- Improve visibility of the Community Development Department (Comms, consultation, and marketing)
- Community/Stakeholder Newsletter
- Community Development - Marketing Plan
- Community Improvement Plan
- Tourism Strategy
- Waterfront Master Plan
- Strategy for development of Secondary Plan Lands

Support growth by evidence-based decision-making, regular progress monitoring and reporting.

- Establish a Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) program.
- Community Improvement Plan

High Quality Services

Match investments in the City's services and infrastructure to its growth and the changing needs of its residents.

- Development secondary plan lands

Continuously improve the City's capacity to deliver services effectively, efficiently, and in a timely manner.

- Concierge Service

Explore avenues of collaboration with other municipalities for mutual support and the benefit of the communities they serve.

Community Cohesion

Consistently engage the community to keep the pulse of its needs and aspirations.

- Economic Development Advisory Committee

Promote active citizenship to strengthen attachment and contribution to the community.

- Festival 2024 / Fête du Canada / Summer Spirits

Foster the growth of community organizations that bring about positive impact in the community.

- Score Tennis Academy
- Sports Complex Operating Agreement
- Gare de Bourget

Discussion

WHY FOCUS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

As was heard throughout the process of the creation of the city's Economic Development strategy and the city's new strategic plan, the city and its stakeholders envision robust opportunities, based on public investment through local leadership, and business diversification and expansion. Clarence-Rockland aspires to maintain a vibrant economy supporting an attractive and caring community. Those aspirations extend to improving the business climate of the city, and connections to neighbouring areas.

We have heard that stakeholders have expressed concern that if nothing is done in terms of economic development, local businesses will not feel supported and potential new developers may get turned off. Opportunities could be missed, and perceptions of the city by residents could be diminished.

ASSUMPTIONS/LIMITATIONS

As with any significant project assumptions and limitations must be considered to ensure that goals and objectives are achieved.

In the city's Economic Development Strategic Plan, it was highlighted that the limited human and financial resources of the Economic Development division must be considered to ensure achieving the objectives of the economic development strategic plan. It was made clear that one employee will not be able to complete all the recommendations in the Economic Development Strategy.

It was also assumed that with agreement of Council to hire additional human resources for the Economic Development division, work plans will be adjusted to make best use of time to focus on existing and new priority initiatives.

As we move towards the completion of the city's new Community Improvement Plan program (CIP) and look towards the implementation of the new CIP program we are being reminded of the human and financial limitations of the Economic Development division that were brought forward in the Economic Development Strategic Plan. The new Community Improvement Plan program will be a key part of the city's economic development toolbox in attracting, retaining and supporting expanding businesses therefore we must ensure that we are setting up this key initiative for success with the proper human and financial resources as indicated by

Sierra Planning and Management in (Attachment 1 - Implementing a Successful CIP – June 24, 2024).

The Community Development Department (Economic Development Division) over the course of the last two years have focused on tasks that began to make the city’s Economic Development Action Plan operational while also creating a solid foundation for the department that will be imperative for the future sustainability of the city.

MOVING FORWARD

The Economic Development division is now at a pivotal point in our road map to economic sustainability. With work plans that have been developed and with the importance of economic development being highlighted in the city’s new strategic plan, decisions must now be made to provide additional staff support for the Economic Development division.

The request being put forward is to bring on an additional support staff to support the work of the Economic Development division as a pilot project initiative over the course of the next two years. The addition of support staff would allow for key projects in the Economic Development Action Plan to move forward without delay while at the same time will increase the division’s ability to support and develop key programs and projects in a timely manner.

PROGRAMS & PROJECTS/RESOURCE ALLOCATION

With the addition of support staff to the Economic Development division focus will be placed on the key projects below over the course of the next 24 months.

Programs & Projects
Data, Research and Analysis (KPI’s)
Community and Stakeholder Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic Development Newsletter• Establish Economic Development Advisory Committee
Business Retention and Expansion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yearly Business Survey• Business Assistance Program (CIP)
Business Attraction & Development Investment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnership Development• Strategy for development of Secondary Plan Lands• Lead generation and Site Plan Tours
Branding and Visual Identity (Community Development Department) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marketing collateral for Community Development Department• Business attraction collateral for Economic Development

<p>Website and Social Media (Economic Development)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of Economic Development web content • Creation of Economic Development social media content • Creation of new business directory for website • Creation of Available Lands and Buildings listing for website
<p>Tourism Asset Development/Destination Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Tourism Strategy for Clarence-Rockland • Waterfront Master Plan

The position being requested as part of this pilot project is that of an Administrative Coordinator - Economic Development and Tourism.

Department work plans would be adjusted to make best use of staff time to focus on existing and new priority initiatives.

- **45% of staff hours:** On-the-ground interaction with local businesses, understanding expansion plans, facilitating incentives (CIP Program), Business Expansion and Retention initiatives (yearly business survey).
- **35% of staff hours:** Focus on priority initiatives, coordination of Community Development Newsletter, website, social media and other marketing and communications specific to economic development and tourism.
- **20% of staff hours:** Building rapport, supporting, and facilitating opportunities through the Economic Development Advisory Committee and other committees as required, conduct research to high growth potential sectors as per Economic Development strategies and conduct research for funding opportunities suitable for the city.

Consultation

N/A

Recommendations or comments from committee/ other departments

N/A

Financial impact (expenses/material/etc.)

In the 2024 Budget process a contribution in the amount of \$150,000 from the Economic Development reserve was allocated to Economic Development Revenues to support the launch of the city’s new Community Development Plan (CIP) program.

The new CIP program remains under development and will be completed in the Fall of 2024. The new CIP program will open for intake of funding applications in early 2025.

Staff are requesting that the funds allocated to the new CIP program in the 2024 budget (\$150,000) be reallocated to the salary for the new support position of Administrative Coordinator – Economic Development and Tourism at a Class 6B (\$26.69/hr to \$32.90/hr) salary range. for the duration of the Economic Development pilot project (two years).

A request for funds to support the launch of the new Community Improvement Plan grant program in 2025 will come fourth in the 2025 budget planning process.

Legal implications

N/A

Risk management

N/A

Strategic implications

See discussion section

Supporting documents

Attachment 1: Implementing a Successful CIP – June 24, 2024

Attachment 2: Economic Development Pilot Project - June 19, 2024
(PowerPoint)