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Date: September 4, 2019
To: Mayor and Council
Author: Peggy Van Mierlo-West, CAO
RE: Rural Economic Development Fund - Request
Report No.: CAO 20-2019

AIM

To provide Council information regarding the current intake of the Rural Economic Development Fund and to request approval for application.

BACKGROUND

Ontario's Rural Economic Development (RED) program provides cost-share funding to support activities that create strong rural communities in Ontario, and opens doors to rural economic development through:

- funding assistance to address barriers to economic development, better position rural communities to attract and retain jobs and investment, and enhance economic growth
- funding to build community capacity and support for economic development in Ontario's rural communities
- investments in rural communities to help diversify and grow local economies – making economic growth more inclusive so Rural Ontario continues to share in the province's economic prosperity

There are two streams for intake within this program Economic Diversification and Competitiveness Stream and the Strategic Economic Infrastructure Stream.

Economic diversification and competitiveness projects can include:

- remove barriers to business and job growth
- attract investment
- attract or retain a skilled workforce
- strengthen sector and regional partnerships

- diversify regional economies in Rural Ontario

Strategic economic infrastructure projects advance economic development and investment opportunities in Rural Ontario, such as:

- rehabilitation of cultural, heritage or tourism attractions
- redevelopment of vacant or under-used properties
- main street minor capital improvements

Applications for strategic economic infrastructure projects should include previously completed work (for example, plans, strategies, research and data) that identifies the project as an economic development priority.

DISCUSSION

Based upon review of current projects, the Kingsville Strategic Plan, Kingsville Economic Development Strategic plan it is recommended the Town apply within the Economic Diversification and Competitiveness stream.

Recently the Town purchased software to mobilize building permit approvals and to improve communication with the building community. While beta testing is still ongoing the response from the community has been very favorable. Internally, staff are able to maintain files digitally to improve record keeping and information transfer between departments such as permit payments, inspections and orders have improved.

The first step in this process was to provide this software to the Building Department and the next step was to implement the Planning Department system at a later date.

Through online and real time application submission and updates Building, Planning, Fire, Finance and Corporate Services Department will be able to combine resources to provide for expedited approvals and improved communication.

Some of the foreseeable additional benefits to the business community will include:

- Expedited diagnosis and operational vision
- Improved modeling of business process architecture
- Easier review of work organization and deployment of improvement
- Reduction in the amount of paper documents to process
- Real-time follow-up of the activities and performances
- Ensure business durability through
- Instill a culture of excellence within your company
- Strengthen the sense of belonging and commitment

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Support growth of the business community.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is proposed that this project would be implemented in 2020 and would be included within the budget deliberations. The RED Fund will fund up to half of the project. The total estimated cost of this project is approximately \$56,000.00.

CONSULTATIONS

Information Technology
Planning
Finance
Building Department

RECOMMENDATION

That Council direct the CAO to apply to the Rural Economic Development Grant program under the Economic Diversification and Competitiveness Stream for software optimization.

Name

Name, Credentials
Title/Position

Name

Name, Credentials
Title/Position

Peggy Van Mierlo-West

Peggy Van Mierlo-West, C.E.T.
Chief Administrative Officer