

Memorandum

Date: July 7, 2020

To: Members of Council

From: Ben Roberts, Manager of Business Development, Tourism and Culture, Strategic Initiatives

Subject: Economic Development Strategy – Implementation Plan

This memo provides details on the implementation of the recommended actions within the Town's Economic Development Strategy 2020-2030.

Background

In June 2019, MDB Insight was retained to complete the necessary research and work with staff to develop a new Economic Development Strategy ("Strategy") for the Town of Caledon, which had been identified as a priority for this term of Caledon Council.

On March 24, 2020 Caledon Council approved the Caledon 2020-2030 An Economic Development Strategy for The Town of Caledon. Through the Strategy adoption, staff identified the need for a detailed implementation plan to help guide overall prioritization of the 46 short, medium and long-term recommendations.

Caledon 2020-2030 An Economic Development Strategy for the Town of Caledon

The Strategy is underpinned by four priorities and associated objectives:

Priority I: Support an Entrepreneurial and Small Business Economy

The strategic objective is to:

- Provide entrepreneurs with the tools and resources to succeed in an increasingly integrated regional, provincial and global economy

Priority II: Focus on Business Retention and Growth

The strategic objective is to:

- Work with and for our local businesses to generate new investment and innovation in the Caledon economy

Priority III: Improve our Quality of Place

The strategic objective is to:

- Create vibrant, attractive urban/rural communities throughout our urban core, villages and hamlets that respects Caledon's rural heritage but is responsive to the planned growth of the town

Priority IV: Enhance our Investment Readiness

The strategic objective is to:

- Provide the structure and policies to effectively target investment attraction and diversification of the local economy

Implementation

The Strategy Implementation Plan (Attached as Schedule A to this Memo) provides the key tasks for each of the short-term actions as identified within the Strategy. Please note that only short term actions will have tasks associated with them. The tasks and associated timelines identified within each action have considered existing staff resourcing throughout the Town as a whole. If it is determined that additional resources are required to complete specific actions, staff will request those resources through the annual budget process.

As the Strategy spans the next ten years, this implementation plan will be updated, with tasks and timelines for medium and long-term actions, through annual Strategy updates to Town Council.

COVID-19 – Economic Recovery

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Economic Development and Tourism has actively supported Caledon's business community. As highlighted in the April 7 Council memo "Economic Development and Tourism Update -COVID-19", staff actions include:

- Centralized information regarding available COVID-19 supports at caledon.ca/business website
- Moved from monthly to bi-weekly Economic Development newsletter to Caledon business community with updated resources and tools.
- Local business survey conducted to understand impact of COVID-19 on local businesses
- "Open for Business" interactive map produced to identify businesses that continue to operate during the pandemic
- Participation and promotion of the ShopHERE campaign to give Caledon small businesses and artists greater access to e-commerce tools and markets.
- Working with the Mayor's Office, conducted a business focused Telephone Town Hall with Mayor Thompson, MPP Jones and MP Seeback.

In regard to Strategy, staff have reviewed the actions through a lens of COVID-19 recovery. Council will notice that staff have prioritized tasks in a number of short-term actions (ex 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 2.4, etc.) that staff feel are directly related to community COVID-19 recovery. Economic Development and Tourism staff are members of the Town's Community Recovery Team and will seek to advance these short-term Strategy actions as well as other policy/program options that may assist in supporting our various business sectors.

Annual Status Update for Council

The goals of the Economic Development Strategy are to create an environment that is conducive to attracting and retaining current, new and diverse investment that will create employment, diversify the Town's tax base and generate wealth and opportunity for the Town while maintaining a balance of high quality urban and rural living.

The Economic Development and Tourism division is currently developing a series of measures to help demonstrate progress on Strategy recommendations. An annual Strategy status update will be provided to Council every year, starting in Q3 2021, allowing Council to review progress on the approved Strategy and provide feedback to staff on Strategy execution.

Attachments

Schedule A: Strategy Implementation Plan