

Discussion Paper - Beyond DTR: Reimagining Economic Development for Central Frontenac

Foreword:

The following discussion paper in its initial draft should not be considered as an official proposal of the Economic Development Committee. Items are subject to review, revision and may be adopted in whole or in part.

The purpose of this discussion paper is to assist members of the Economic Development Committee in envisioning the work of the Committee beyond the creation of the Sharbot Lake Downtown Revitalization Strategic Plan, including the implementation of the Plan and its expansion into other communities.

Respectfully submitted to the Committee for consideration.

B. Cameron

Introduction

The Central Frontenac Economic Development Committee (established under bylaw by Council) has undertaken the lead responsibility in developing a “Downtown Revitalization Plan” for the village core of Sharbot Lake. This plan, financially supported by the Township, the Government of Ontario (through OMAFRA’s RED grant program), and the Sharbot Lake Business Group, seeks to build upon the foundation established after the major road and streetscape reconstruction that took place in 2020.

The work of the Committee, through a “DTR Management Group” has developed a Strategic Plan for Council’s consideration and recommendations for the future development of the village core. It is the hope of the Economic Development Committee that this plan will inform Township policies and priorities for this area, including budgeting and planning.

The Economic Development Committee’s existing commitment to the Strategic Plan can be summed in two parts:

1. Seeing through the recommendations of the Strategic Plan, providing support, assisting in its ongoing monitoring; and
2. Replicating the work of the Strategic Plan to form the basis of similar planning and priority setting in other villages and hamlets, including (but not restricted to):
 - a. Arden
 - b. Godfrey / Piccadilly
 - c. Henderson
 - d. Mountain Grove
 - e. Parham
 - f. Tichborne

As we near the completion of the process of developing the strategic plan for Sharbot Lake, it is useful to examine whether the current structure of the committee can best optimize the work done to date and expand its footprint beyond Sharbot Lake and to other parts of the township.

Central Frontenac

The governance structure of the current project is one where Sharbot Lake Downtown Revitalization is being developed by a subcommittee of the Township Economic Development Committee and includes the input / support of Economic Development committee members, township staff (through Public Works), Frontenac County's Economic Development department, the Province of Ontario (RED grant program) and financial contributions from the Sharbot Lake Business Group.

While the Committee sees expansion of the work beyond the downtown core of Sharbot Lake, the current focus has been specific to Sharbot Lake. This is due in no small measure to the nature of the project's remit – as an adjunct to the street reconstruction project in 2020, as well as the terms of reference for the grant funding from the Province of Ontario.

With the Strategic Plan for Sharbot Lake's Downtown Core nearing completion and presentation to Township Council, the Economic Development Committee will transition into advocating for, and working toward, the implementation of its several recommendations. In addition to this, the Committee must also begin to develop similar strategies for other villages and hamlets in Central Frontenac, as well as explore other initiatives that do not readily fit within the remit of Downtown Revitalization (e.g. participation in the BizPal program, promotion of the local economy through public-private partnerships and advocacy).

The Economic Development Committee is comprised of a dedicated group of individuals who - although limited by timeframes, resources and remit – have worked diligently to deliver a Strategic Plan for Sharbot Lake. Despite the extraordinary amount of work, attention and effort of Committee members, its "bandwidth" has been almost completely subsumed by the Sharbot Lake Downtown Revitalization project.

To further assist in the implementation of the Plan's recommendations, as well as the project's replication to other villages and hamlets, the Committee will lack the size, scope and resources sufficient to carry out these priorities simultaneously. From its current guise, the Committee would need to greatly expand in both composition and in remit. This presents the danger of a Committee that becomes too large or too concentrated on some priorities at the expense of others.

To fulfill its core mandate, put the recommendations of Sharbot Lake DTR into action, and expand to other centres in the Township, it may be necessary to consider a reimagined Committee, as well as how the Township addresses the ongoing challenge of Economic Development in general.

The City of Kawartha Lakes Experience

At the October 27th meeting of the Economic Development / Downtown Revitalization Committee, Carlie Arbour, Economic Development Coordinator for the City of Kawartha Lakes attended virtually to provide background on their experience. Kawartha Lakes has successfully completed multiple (and

concurrent) downtown revitalization projects for their communities, including Lindsay, Cobocok and Bobcaygeon.

The governance structure of the Kawartha Lakes projects was that of community working groups for each of the population centres, each with representation to a “Downtowns Revitalization Committee”. This committee, in turn, was supported by the municipality’s economic development department in terms of human and financial resources. This would include allocation of both township resources and any funds derived from provincial grants (such as OMAFRA’s RED program).

In this model, the working groups take a major role in development and implementation in their respective communities, while the DRC coordinates the whole. While the DRC does not have a set budget for its work, it utilizes staff resources from the municipality’s Economic Development department, and direct financial support where the municipality deems appropriate.

Kawartha Lakes has, as a result, been able to complete multiple Strategic Plans, including building relationships with business and community groups to effectively implement their collective recommendations.

Recommendations for discussion:

As the preparatory work of the Downtown Revitalization Sub-Committee nears completion, with the issuance of a final strategic plan, the Economic Development Committee is presented with the challenge of the additional tasks of translating the Strategic Plan’s recommendations into results, and to “build out” this roadmap as to foster and encourage similar development in other villages and hamlets in the Township.

1. That the Township consider establishing Economic Development as a permanently supported staff function within the Township which would include, but not be restricted to:
 - a. professional support to the Committee;
 - b. identifying and coordinating applications toward matching grant funding for projects in Central Frontenac;
 - c. promotion of the local economy through assisting in the development of partner initiatives with local businesses
 - d. investigation and development of a plan to establish a “Central Frontenac Chamber of Commerce”
 - e. ongoing preparation of consumer and demographic data to help local businesses in identifying market trends in Central Frontenac, as well as throughout the region.
2. That the existing Economic Development Committee be reconstituted as a “Communities Revitalization Committee” with terms of reference that are expanded to allowing for the formation of working groups that can focus on development challenges and projects in their respective villages and hamlets; and that those working groups use the Sharbot Lake DTR report and research data as a starting point for their own projects **(an initial draft structure for consideration is included in Appendix A of this paper)**

3. That the previous Community Improvement Plan (CIP) program – previously supported by the Township and the County – be reviewed and reconstituted as to provide the primary means of supporting the various Strategic Plans that may be established for each constituent community, and be financially sustainable in its function

APPENDIX A

Communities Revitalization Committee

Proposed Terms of Reference

Mission:

The Communities Revitalization Committee is a volunteer Committee appointed by Township Council. The purpose of the Committee is to develop and oversee the implementation of Strategic Plans for constituent villages and hamlets as approved by Council to stimulate the economic, social and physical prosperity of those communities. The Committee will provide advice and assistance to Council and staff, provide opportunities for communities to collaborate, and support the implementation of all Community Revitalization Strategic Plans.

The activities of the Committee will align with core pillars of the Communities Revitalization program: Physical Improvements, Economic Development, Communications and Marketing, as well as Leadership and Management

Roles and Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of all appointed members to comply with:

- the Township of Central Frontenac Code of Conduct
- the Township Procedural By-law
- Other applicable by-laws and policies
- Municipal Act
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

No individual member, or the Committee as a whole, has the authority to make direct representations of the Township to Federal or Provincial Governments.

Members shall abide by the rules outlined within the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act and shall disclose any pecuniary interest to the Recording Secretary and absent himself or herself from meetings for the duration of the discussion and voting (if any) with respect to that matter.

The Committee will abide by any terms and conditions which may be set out by the Township Council, CAO / Clerk, municipal legal counsel, Township Auditor and/or Insurer for any activities relating to Committee business in keeping with the Committee's Terms of Reference and established Policies.

Activities:

The following represent the general activities of the Committee:

- a) To prepare an annual written report to Council by the end of Q1 each calendar year to outline the Committee's achievements from the previous year in line with their approved work plan and to present to Council their current year work plan to include details on promotion of public education programs, review of other government reports, programs and legislation for any impacts on the Township or its programs, and future Township policy direction all with the view of advancing the Township's adopted strategic priorities and the proposed budget.
- b) To make recommendations to Council on priority activities identified as "Township Led" or "Collaborative" in the Community Revitalization Strategic Plan that may impact and inform future year Township's budgets. Priorities from each Community Revitalization Strategic Plan will be identified by each community and put forward by the Committee in a combined Staff report.
- c) To make recommendations to Council on strategy, policies and various issues to achieve Council's strategic priorities relating to the Committee's mission.
- d) Identify and advise Council on policy and advocacy actions that are identified in the Community Revitalization Strategic Plans as barriers to, or opportunities for, growth in the Township's villages and hamlets.
- e) Act as a conduit for information between the municipality and communities with regards to implementation of "Township Led", "Collaborative" and "Community Led" actions in the Community Revitalization Strategic Plans.
- f) Support for cross-community collaboration and implementation of projects.
- g) Monitor and advance the progress of the Community Revitalization Strategic Plans.
- h) In each community a Working Group may be established to implement local actions of the Community Revitalization Strategic Plan

Composition:

The Committee shall be comprised of a maximum of 11 members consisting of one (1) Council representative, one (1) member from each community working group, as well as up to four (4) members at large, representing each of the Township's electoral districts. The Council representative shall serve as the Committee chair.

The committee will include. Representation from Township staff, the Economic Development department of the County of Frontenac, or representatives from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs may attend as a resource to the Committee.

Individual Community Working Groups shall be comprised of a maximum of 7 members. The composition of Working Groups may be drawn from existing local business groups, community organizations, and interested parties within the community. In communities where a Working Group exists, the Working Group's representative to the Communities Revitalization Committee shall serve as the Chair.

All appointed Committee members may be represented at meetings by a designated alternate (if applicable) from their Working Group. The designated alternate must be formally identified by an appointed member in writing to the Committee Secretary. Designated alternates are subject to all of the requirements and criteria set out in the Terms of Reference.

Each community represented on the committee will hold an equal role. All community Action Plans will be considered with an equal standard, with no one community's priorities taking precedence.

Committee members will be appointed by Council in accordance with established policy.

Appointment of Officers:

The Committee shall, at its first meeting in each year, elect from its membership a Vice-Chair. It is acknowledged that there are no per diems for any Committee positions and it is acknowledged that none of the above positions shall be paid for their services. All Committee members are considered volunteer positions.

Term of Appointment:

Unless exempted by legislation, members will be appointed for a term of four years with terms expiring at the full term of Council. Members shall continue to serve beyond the end of their term until the appointments of their successors have been approved by Council.

Resources:

The Township of Central Frontenac will provide support in the form of advice, day-to-day liaison with applicable staff, updates on program and promotional ideas and initial assistance in their implementation to the degree resources are available. Designated staff will also assist in the preparation and submission of budget recommendations/grant submissions, if needed and attend meetings of the Committee.

A member of staff shall be designated as Recording Secretary by the liaison department. The Recording Secretary shall prepare and publish agendas; attend all formal business Committee

Meetings for the purpose of taking Minutes; and prepare and publish minutes in an accessible format acceptable to the Township CAO.

The Recording Secretary shall ensure that a current Terms of Reference for the Committee has been provided to the CAO and is available for public access.

Timing of Meetings:

Meetings will be held on a set day and time as may be determined by the Committee or at the call of the Chair.

Location of Meetings:

The location of the meetings will be set by the Committee or Working Group and must be held in either a Township facility, or an alternative location that meets the Township of Central Frontenac's policy on accessibility.

Meetings:

The Committee shall hold a minimum of four (4) meetings in each calendar year. The Chair, with the assistance of staff, shall cause notice of the meetings, including the agenda for the meetings, to be provided to members of the Committee a minimum of three (3) business days prior to the date of each meeting through the Recording Secretary. Quorum for meetings shall consist of a majority of the members of the Committee. No meeting shall proceed without quorum.

At the first meeting of each year, an Orientation Session shall be held for new members.

Committee working meetings and Working Group meetings throughout the year to advance the efforts of the work plan shall be held at the call of the Chair of the Committee or Working Group with the Chair providing notice of the working meetings to all members of the Committee a minimum of three (3) business days prior to the date of each meeting. No formal minutes are required to be taken at working meetings; however, notes shall be taken.

Procedures:

Procedures for the formal business meetings of the Committee shall be governed by the Township of Central Frontenac Procedural By-law.

Electronic Participation:

Rules related to electronic participation in meetings shall be subject to Township of Central Frontenac procedures and are applicable to meetings of the Communities Revitalization Committee. Meetings of the constituent Working Groups are not covered by this policy and must be conducted in person:

Closed Meetings:

The Committee shall not be permitted to hold Closed Meetings.

Agendas and Minutes:

A copy of the Agenda shall be provided to Township staff for review and distribution to Committee Members.

Minutes of all formal business meetings and notes from Working Group meetings shall be forwarded to Township staff within two (2) weeks of the meeting. Action items requested of staff and/or Council will be brought to the attention of Township staff at that time. Staff will circulate the adopted business meeting minutes to all members of Council for their information.

The Recording Secretary shall ensure that all Committee Agendas and Minutes are circulated as per Township policy.

Reports:

One written report to Council is required per year from the Committee, being the work plan/budget and the previous year's annual report.

If there are recommendations of the Communities Revitalization Committee that fall outside of this report, they are to be forwarded to Council, through Township staff in a formal written report.

Purchasing Policy:

This Committee has no purchasing or procurement responsibilities.

Insurance:

The Township of Central Frontenac policy covering general liability, as well as errors and omissions liability will extend to this Committee and its members. The applicable insurance policies extend to Committee members while in the performance of his/her duties and to those activities authorized by the Township of Central Frontenac and Council. Members must adhere to the policies and procedures of the Township of Central Frontenac and Council, including the Terms of Reference.

The Committee must provide, via the liaison department an annual updated listing of all members, including member positions, to the Township of Central Frontenac to ensure the applicable insurance coverage remains in force.

Committee members are not entitled to any benefits normally provided by the Corporation of the Township of Central Frontenac, including those provided by the Workplace Safety and

Insurance Board of Ontario (“WSIB”) and are responsible for their own medical, disability or health insurance coverage.

Expulsion of Member:

Any member of the Committee who misses three consecutive formal business meetings, without being excused by the Committee, may be removed from the Committee in accordance with adopted policy.

Any member of the Committee may be removed from the Committee at the discretion of Council for reasons including, but not limited to, the member being in contravention of the Municipal Act, the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Provincial Offences Act, The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act or the Code of Conduct for Committee Members; disrupting the work of the Committee; or other legal issues.

Terms of Reference:

The Recording Secretary shall ensure that a current Terms of Reference for the Committee has been provided to the Township and is available for public viewing.

Any responsibilities not clearly identified within these Terms of Reference shall be the responsibility of the Township of Central Frontenac. Council may, at its discretion, change the Terms of Reference for this Committee at any time. Any changes proposed to these Terms of Reference by the Committee shall be recommended to Council via the liaison department through a report to Council.

At the discretion of Council the Committee may be dissolved by resolution of Council.