

REPORT

REPORT TO: Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee

REPORT FROM: Cassandra Baccardax, Economic Development Officer

DATE: May 1, 2019

REPORT NO.: RPT-ADMIN-2019-0017

RE: Award of Proposal P-043-19 for the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report ADMIN-2019-0017, dated May 1, 2019, regarding Award of Proposal P-043-19 for the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Committee approve the award to Mellor Murray Consulting of 31 Ivy Place, Chatham, ON, N7L 5R7, in the amount of \$111,175 (plus HST) for the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy;

AND FURTHER THAT the Manager of Purchasing be authorized to issue a purchase order to Mellor Murray Consulting of 31 Ivy Place, Chatham, ON, N7L 5R7, in the amount of \$111,175 (plus HST) for the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.

BACKGROUND:

The existing Economic Development Strategy was approved in 2012 and the Tourism Strategy was completed in 2014. Since then, the economy has changed significantly. A new and consolidated "Economic Development and Tourism Strategy" is needed to:

1. Provide a modern and strategic roadmap for the Town's economic prosperity;
2. Complete an updated analysis of Halton Hills' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT);
3. Reflect changing market conditions;
4. Reflect the success of the CIP program;
5. Align with advancements of key studies (e.g. Phase 1B, Vision Georgetown, Transit Strategy);
6. Align with the Town's focus on tourism/arts/cultural opportunities; and
7. Leverage international opportunities for trade and investment.

Supplementing the overall Economic Development Strategy will be three-sub-strategies:

- **Tourism Sub-strategy:** Will position the Town as a leading destination for investment and growth in the Tourism sector (including cultural and heritage tourism);
- **Green Economy Sub-strategy:** Will build on the Community Sustainability strategy, Mayor's Community Energy Plan, Green Development Standards and other related initiatives to position the Town as a leading destination for investment and growth in the clean-technology/low-carbon and related sectors of the economy; and
- **Brownfield Redevelopment Sub-strategy:** Will focus on addressing regulatory, land-use planning and financial challenges posed by brownfield sites. The objective will be to promote the remediation, rehabilitation, adaptive re-use, redevelopment and overall redevelopment of brownfield sites.

The Economic Development and Tourism Strategy will also include a marketing and communications plan recommending a practical suite of marketing collateral to support implementation.

By consolidating three previously approved projects, the consolidated Strategy will not only assure alignment, but will also generate significant cost-savings.

The project will be guided and informed by a Project Advisory Committee which will fulfill a technical as well as a steering role. The Project Advisory Committee is proposed to be comprised of internal staff and external stakeholders that represent the business community and have the necessary expertise to assist with the Strategy's development. The Committee will:

- Provide comments during the Strategy process;
- Assist with issue identification and resolution;
- Liaise with their respective organizations to ensure one-window input as well as Strategy awareness;
- Provide data input;
- Meet on a regular basis to monitor the progress of the strategy.

The ultimate result will be a 5-year Strategy with a detailed 3-year Action Plan. An updated, modern, strategic, comprehensive and actionable Economic Development and Tourism Strategy will reflect current economic conditions and opportunities. It will help ensure the Town's continued economic prosperity.

COMMENTS:

A Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy was issued on March 12, 2019. The bid was posted on the Town's website and advertised on the bidsandtenders.ca website. The contract term is for a one-time project, with expected completion to take approximately 14 months.

Twelve (12) firms downloaded the document. The RFP closed on April 2, 2019 and three (3) submissions were received as follows:

Vendor	Location
Floor 13	Montreal, PQ
Global Investment Attraction Group (GIAG)	Kitchener, ON
Mellor Murray Consulting	Chatham, ON

Bids were evaluated by a staff team based on Experience and Project Team Credentials; Approach, Methodology and Value Add; and Work Schedule and Fees. Mellor Murray Consulting was determined to be the highest ranking proponent.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Economic development is one of Council's strategic priorities and underpins the economic prosperity of Halton Hills. Economic growth makes it possible for the Town to deliver services in an effective, efficient and economical manner. Completion of the Strategy will advance Council's priorities of implementing the Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy (Economic Prosperity pillar) and advancing Rural Economic Development priorities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Funding for this Economic Development and Tourism Strategy (including the sub-strategies) has already been approved by Council as part of the Capital Budget. The consolidation of a number of separate and previously approved projects will result in cost-savings and an integrated approach to economic development. Originally, the budget for the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy plus the separate Green Economy Action Plan and Brownfield Strategy totalled \$215,000. Now, the consolidated Economic Development and Tourism Strategy is \$111,175 + HST. The difference is being held to assist with future implementation.

The bid as submitted by Mellor Murray Consulting is being recommended as it meets or exceeds the specifications in all regards.

CONSULTATION:

The evaluation committee included staff from Economic Development, and Planning and Sustainability. Purchasing staff are in agreement with the recommendation of this report.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public engagement will be a key component of developing the strategy. Council, Town staff, industry and the general public will be engaged throughout the project. A variety of engagement tools will be leveraged, including workshops, industry roundtables, one-to-one meetings, surveys, Let's Talk Halton Hills platform and a project webpage. The TAC will provide additional engagement opportunities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life.

The recommendation outlined in this report advances the Strategy's implementation. This report supports all four pillars of Sustainability - Economic Prosperity, Cultural Vibrancy, Social Wellbeing and Environmental Health – and the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is **Excellent**.

COMMUNICATIONS:

As the project is launched, a variety of communications channels will be used to maximize community awareness of the project.

CONCLUSION:

Putting an updated, modern, strategic, comprehensive and actionable Economic Development and Tourism Strategy in place will position Halton Hills for future growth and prosperity. Staff recommends the award of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy contract to Mellor Murray Consulting.

Reviewed and approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Damian Szybalski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Damian Szybalski, Director of Economic Development, Innovation & Culture

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Brent Marshall, Chief Administrative Officer