



Committee Report

To: Councillor Steve Hammell, Chair and
Members of the Planning and Development Committee

From: Mark Paoli
Director of Planning and Development

Date: May 19, 2022

Re: Small Business Enterprise Centre Program 2022-2024

Staff Recommendation:

That the Director of Planning and Development be authorized to sign the necessary agreements with the Province of Ontario in support of the Small Business Enterprise Centre Program 2022-2024.

Background:

The Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) Program is comprised of the SBEC Core, Starter Company Plus and Summer Company programs. The Province established the SBEC Program to provide business resources, training and mentoring to entrepreneurs, businesses, and youth. The Starter Company and Summer Company programs provide micro-financing to individuals including adults and youth to start, expand, or purchase a small business.

Summary:

The Planning and Development department operates the SBEC Program via Business to Bruce. The new SBEC Program started on April 1, 2022, will continue until March 31, 2024 and is detailed below:

- **SBEC Core:** This program provides business advisory supports and skills development to entrepreneurs and small businesses to improve the success rate and longevity of small businesses and build growth and prosperity in local communities. The services are focused but not limited to clients starting a business or expanding an existing business.
- **Starter Company Plus:** This program provides training, mentoring and grants of up to \$5,000 of the funds to approved participants to start, expand or buy a small business. It aims to address local and/or regional economic development needs, and where appropriate focus on special industries and sectors.
- **Summer Company:** This program provides training, mentoring and grants of up to \$3,000 to youth entrepreneurs who wish to start a full-time business over the summer. It aims to inspire youth to choose entrepreneurship as a career option and equip them with tools to succeed.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

The Corporation of the County of Bruce is receiving a total of \$392,746 (\$196,373 annually) from the Province to administer the program for a period of two years. The County will deliver SBEC Programs including SBEC Core, Starter Company Plus and Summer Company.

The SBEC Core Program components include:

- Responding to inquiries related to entrepreneurship and small business, and related service offerings including initiatives, programs etc.
- Providing business consultations and advice to clients to provide personalized options, information, and advisory support to address their business needs.
- Offering business skills development to clients in starting, maintaining, or expanding their small business through short term workshops, training, events or activities.
- Sharing resources and conducting outreach services to the community and entrepreneurs to promote services and develop partnerships.

The County will be delivering four key components of the Starter Company Plus Program that includes Approved Participant Intake, Training and Skills Development, Mentorship and Micro-Grants. The Summer Company Program delivery includes promotion and marketing to the youth, determination of eligibility of potential applicants, assistance in completing applications, assessing submitted applications to determine approved participants and training and mentoring of the approved participants and finally, grant funding upon completion of training and successful running of the summer business.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

None

Link to Strategic Goals and Elements:

Goal 3: Find creative new ways to engage our public

Element C - Make the County fully accessible to the people through access to information

Goal 7: Stimulate and reward innovation and economic development

Element B - Develop a single tier information portal - connect with innovations and new business

Element C - Create local small business incubation and innovation centre for local economic development

Element D - Vocally support all industry in Bruce County

Report Author:

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Departmental Approval:

Mark Paoli
Director, Planning and Development

Approved for Submission:

Derrick Thomson
Chief Administrative Officer