



Committee Report

To: Warden Mitch Twolan
Members of the Planning and Development Committee

From: Kara Van Myall
Director of Planning and Development

Date: September 19, 2019

Re: Small Business Enterprise Centre Program 2019-22

Recommendation:

That the Director of Planning and Development or their designate be authorized to sign the necessary agreements with the Province of Ontario in support of the Small Business Enterprise Centre Program 2019-2022.

Background:

The Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) Program is comprised of the Core Initiative, the Starter Company Plus Initiative and the Summer Company Initiative. The Province has established the SBEC Program to provide important 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 in Ontario.

Summary:

The Planning and Development division operates the SBEC program via Business to Bruce services. New programming agreements began on April 1, 2019 and continue until March 31, 2022.

The details of the three initiatives under the SBEC Program include:

- **SBEC Core Initiative**
This initiative 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 which are typically less than 5 years in operation and have under 10 employees.
- **Starter Company Plus Initiative**
This initiative provides training, mentoring and micro-financing opportunities for approved participants to start, expand or buy a small business. This initiative addresses local and/or regional economic development needs.

- **Summer Company Initiative**
This initiative provides training, mentoring and micro-financing of \$3,000 to Youth who wish to start a full-time business over the summer. This initiative inspires more 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 will undertake the delivery of all three initiatives. We are receiving a total of \$610,119 from the Province for administering these three initiatives for a period of three years. Funding is \$196,373 annually with an additional \$21,000 in the first year. Each year seven successful Starter Company Plus Program participants receive micro-financing in the amount of \$5,000. Each year four successful Summer Company program participants will receive micro-financing in the amount of \$3,000.

There has been a reduction to program funding from the Province and as a result, there is a \$114,499 deficit in the 2020 budget covering both 2019 and 2020 due to the Province's fiscal year beginning in April and ending in March. The impact will also mean fewer grants in the Starter Company Plus program (from 20 to 7) and less resources for program delivery.

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

Written by: Manpreet Kaur Sangha, Economic Development Officer, Planning and Development