



Municipality of North Grenville

Report No.
CAO-005-2020

File No.
C7-CAO

Agenda Date:	June 16, 2020 - Council Meeting
Subject:	RTO 9 Partnership Fund Agreement
Attachments:	Appendix 1: RTO 9 Partnership Fund Opportunity COW Report Appendix 2: Region 9 Regional Tourism Organization Agreement Appendix 3: Region 9 Regional Tourism Organization Invoice

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation is provided for Council's consideration:

That Council recommends a by-law be enacted to authorize the Municipality to enter into an agreement with the Region 9 Regional Tourism Organization for funding under the Region 9 Regional Tourism Organization Partnership Fund;

And Further That the Municipality agrees to pay the Region 9 Regional Tourism Organization Partnership Fund \$20,000 to cover 50% of eligible costs of the Tourism Strategy Project.

BACKGROUND

RTO 9 is a Regional Tourism Organization that is funded by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. RTO 9 actively promotes tourism for the South Eastern Ontario region and works to support and grow the industry through product development initiatives. Their mission is to develop results driven marketing and product initiatives to achieve the highest growth of tourism visitation revenues and investment amongst Ontario's tourism regions.

In January 2020, RTO 9 announced that their Partnership Fund was open for intake. RTO 9's Partnership Fund initiative is designed to build on existing and introduce new tourism products that enhance the region's diversity of tourism attractions and competitive advantage by supporting the development of tourism experiences in the region.

On February 05, 2020 Council directed Staff to proceed with applying to the RTO 9 Partnership Fund for funding to support the development of a North Grenville Tourism Strategy (**Appendix 1**).

ANALYSIS

On April 15, 2020, Staff received confirmation that the Municipality has been approved for \$20,000 to support the development of a North Grenville Tourism Strategy. The total cost of the project will be \$45,000 with \$20,000 coming from RTO 9 and \$25,000 coming from the Municipality's approved 2020 capital budget.

In order to receive the grant, the Municipality must enter into the attached agreement with the Region 9 Regional Tourism Organization. The Municipality must also pay the Region 9 Regional (**Appendix 2**).

Tourism Organization \$20,000 to cover 50% of eligible costs of the Tourism Strategy Project (**Appendix 3**).

The tourism industry is an integral part of the Municipality's local economy. Total employment in the Municipality's tourism industry grew from 655 jobs in 2011 to 761 jobs in 2016. The tourism sectors that contribute the greatest amount of jobs in the municipality are: full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places (475 jobs); other amusement and recreation industries (73 jobs); and school and employee bus transportation (60 jobs).

The overarching purpose of the tourism strategy will be to develop a Strategic Plan for tourism that supports the Municipality's vision and mission as detailed in Council's work plan. Council has identified tourism as a key strategic area of focus and this plan will help develop, in consultation with North Grenville's tourism industry stakeholders, a strategy to move the industry forward. The strategy will leverage the accomplishments of North Grenville's 2017 Marketing Plan and build off of the work completed through the 2019 Tourism BR+E initiative. The plan will provide new and relevant detailed tactics to help guide tourism initiatives in North Grenville for the next 3-5 years.

COVID-19 has had a dramatic and severe impact on the tourism industry in North Grenville. Many of the local tourism businesses have been forced to close their doors and scale back their business services. The tourism strategy will assist the businesses as they recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and look towards a prosperous future.

ALTERNATIVES

1. The Municipality could choose not to move forward with the North Grenville tourism strategy. This is not recommended as the strategy will help unleash the potential of tourism to drive economic growth and job creation the community.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

This item has been approved in the current budget: Yes **x** No ☐ N/A ☐

This item is within the approved budgeted amount: Yes **x** No ☐ N/A ☐

LINK TO COUNCIL WORK PLAN

The North Grenville Tourism Strategy will help to contribute towards the achievement of the following strategic goals set out in Council's work plan:

- 1) Explore development that enhances tourism
- 2) Develop a brand identity
- 3) Become a tourist destination
- 4) Identify and establish a tourism infrastructure

Prepared by:

**Recommendation submitted
for Council Consideration by:**

Original Sign By

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