



To: COUNCIL
Meeting Date: 9/17/2024
Subject: Cambridge Chamber of Commerce 2024 Funding Agreement
Submitted By: Michael Launslager, Director of Economic Development
Prepared By: Michael Launslager, Director of Economic Development
Report No.: 24-012-CRE
File No.: C11
Wards Affected: All Wards

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Report 24-012-CRE Cambridge Chamber of Commerce 2024 Funding be received;

AND THAT Council direct staff to enter into a funding agreement with the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce approved by the City Solicitor, for the purpose of providing basic visitor information services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Purpose

To recommend moving forward with a funding agreement with the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce in order to deliver tourism information services for a period of 12 months.

Key Findings

Staff have carried out negotiations with the Chamber of Commerce and an agreement has been reached in principle that stipulates:

- The Cambridge Chamber of Commerce will provide basic-level visitor services on behalf of the City of Cambridge from their location on Hespeler Road.

Financial Implications

The City of Cambridge will provide \$30,000 through a one-time funding agreement to the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce which will be drawn from the Economic Development Reserve Fund.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

Strategic Action

Objective(s): Not Applicable

Strategic Action: Not Applicable

OR

Core Service

Program: Tourism Promotion & Visitor Information

Core Service: Tourism Promotion & Visitor Information

BACKGROUND:

Under the terms of the previous Visitors Information Service Centre agreement, the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce operated a Visitor Information Service Centre on behalf of the City from their location on Hespeler Road and Hwy 401. The agreement expired in December 2023. Staff have been working with the Chamber of Commerce on negotiating a proposed plan for scaled-down visitor information services for a 12-month period beginning in 2024.

This report provides an update on the outcome of those negotiations, and seeks direction to move forward in order to set the funding and agreements for 2024.

ANALYSIS:

Economic Development and Legal Services staff have been working with the Chamber of Commerce to develop the terms of a one-year pilot to offer scaled-down visitor services. The outcome of those discussions has resulted in an agreement in principle and includes details of how the Chamber of Commerce will offer visitor services for, namely:

- With the expiry of the Visitor's Service Agreement, the City will enter into a one-year funding agreement for 2024 at a cost of \$30,000 for the purposes of:
 - Offering brochures and information on local tourism assets in the Atrium at the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce offices to walk-in customers. This

self serve offering will be available during the hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday.

- Storage of tourism brochures and solicitation of brochure content.
- Fully accessible public washroom availability for visitors, during regular operating hours.

With the Chamber of Commerce providing front-line customer service to visitor inquiries for the duration of a 12-month period, the City is poised to think strategically about how it wishes to engage with visitors to Cambridge specifically, and the tourism sector more generally in the future. In consultation with the City's partners including the Chamber of Commerce, Explore Waterloo Region and three BIAs, staff will continue to develop a strategic vision for supporting and growing the local tourism industry as an economic driver.

EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):

There is no existing policy/by-law. However, there is an existing Lease and Joint Venture Agreement between the City and the Chamber

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The financial impact will be a one-time payment of \$30,000 to the Chamber for scaled-down Visitors Services as set out in this report. This payment will be drawn from the Economic Development Reserve Fund.

PUBLIC VALUE:

Collaboration:

Collaboration in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce allows for seamless service for all businesses across the City. This will allow for better quality service to achieve the goal of a thriving business community.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:

Not Applicable.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Posted publicly as part of the report process

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Internal Consultation has taken place with Legal and Finance.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommend moving forward with a funding agreement with Cambridge Chamber of Commerce to enable visitor information services to be offered for a duration of 12 months. Over the course of the 12-month period, staff will evaluate the effectiveness and value of offering these services long-term.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: **Yes**

By-law: **No**

Budget Amendment: **No**

Policy: **No**

APPROVALS:

This report has gone through the appropriate workflow and has been reviewed and or approved by the following as required:

Director

Deputy City Manager

Chief Financial Officer

City Solicitor

City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

Not Applicable.