



## **Terms of Reference**

### **West Lincoln Rural Employment Strategy 2026**

The overall responsibility and scope of work for the Consultant is to prepare an Economic Development Strategic Plan containing goals, objectives, and implementation actions. The Consultant will also provide facilitation services during the public outreach and stakeholder engagement process. The Consultant, with support from the Municipality's CAO and Director of Growth and Sustainability, shall provide professional services to support the following tasks:

1. Undertake a Situational Analysis of opportunities and challenges based on the existing environment in the municipality. To include discussions with Council, Senior Management, Region of Niagara Economic Development Department, Grand Erie Business Centre, Chamber of Commerce, local Employment Centre and surrounding municipal Economic Development Departments.
2. Review and analyze existing environmental scan.
3. Prepare key demographic trends and forecasts, social factors, economic factors and financial indicators for inclusion into the Strategy. This task should include preparation of market study of the Municipality's retail/commercial and industrial sectors and a community profile. Create a Community Profile, including key demographic trends and forecasts, social and economic factors, as well as financial indicators.
4. Identify the community's assets and competitive advantages, with proposed activities and programs, to incorporate these assets and advantages into an overall economic development strategy. This task should include a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) or SWOT-style analysis of the Municipality and the surrounding area.
5. Review and analyze local by-laws, policies, processes and regulations providing recommendations on making adjustments, where necessary and appropriate, to support sustainable economic growth and diversification.
6. Prepare and facilitate up to three (3) community workshops with business community leaders and farm association(s), the business community in general, Region of Niagara Economic Development, West Lincoln and West Niagara Chamber of Commerce, Employment Centre and other groups and stakeholders in

the Township and other regional economic development groups to identify and understand how the municipality can work collaboratively for complementary growth.

7. Attend up to two meetings with regional Economic Development Departments to identify areas for new regional economic development partnerships and synergies to capitalize on a regional approach to economic development. This would include Haldimand County, Region of Niagara, Town of Grimsby and Town of Lincoln.
8. Attend up to two (2) meetings in the Municipality with Municipal staff and key community members to identify and prioritize economic development goals and objectives and proposed activities and programs.
9. Facilitate a workshop with Council and staff that outlines findings to date and incorporates Council's input and identifies of goals and facilitates development of mission and vision statements.
10. Prepare an initial draft and a final version of the locally based Economic Development Strategic Plan setting forth goals and objectives for taking advantage of the opportunities within and surrounding the Township and its communities. The Economic Development Strategic Plan is to contain an economic development action plan with suggested activities, projects and programs to implement objectives and goals set forth in the Strategy as well as performance measures with timelines to evaluate whether and to what extent plan goals and objectives have been or are being met.
11. Include an Action Plan to implement objectives and goals set out in the Strategic Plan, as well as performance measures for outcomes and action items, including timelines to evaluate if plan goals and objectives have been, or are being met.
12. Assist the CAO and Director of Growth and Sustainability in developing a job description for an Economic Development Officer position.
13. The Consultant will submit a draft report for review by the Senior Management Team and will make appropriate changes as a result of input from attendees. Should a second draft be required, it will be at the cost of the Consultant unless otherwise agreed to by the Municipality.
14. The revised draft Economic Development Strategic Plan should be presented to the Economic Development Committee, and their comments should be incorporated into a revised draft.
15. Present the Economic Development Strategic Plan for Council's consideration and approval.

16. The Consultant will submit three (3) bound copies of the final Economic Development Strategy and an electronic version in Microsoft Word and PDF format by June 30, 2026. In addition, an executive summary and Power Point presentation of the final report in electronic version will also be submitted.

### **Consultant Requirements**

Minimum requirements by the consultant for submission of a proposal to prepare the Economic Development Strategy Plan:

- a. Demonstrated understanding of local economic development theory and practice, research methods, group consensus building, implementation methods, and monitoring and updated processes.
- b. Demonstrated familiarity with development and implementation of economic development policies.
- c. Demonstrated experience, competence, and qualifications of the consultant and the participating staff successfully providing similar services to municipal entities (three (3) references will also be required).
- d. Understanding of the requested services and appropriateness of the proposed work program.
- e. Ability to perform the work in a timely manner, availability of staff (if included) and contingency plans and is to include a work schedule.
- f. Proposals must state the proposer's related business information.