



County Council

Meeting Date: April 14, 2020
Submitted by: Cara Finn, Director of Economic Development
SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF ECONOMIC RESILIENCY TASK FORCE

BACKGROUND:

The County of Middlesex declared A State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 17, 2020, following the lead of the Province.

A business resources toolkit was prepared by Economic Development staff and circulated to local businesses and lower tier municipalities following the Emergency declaration, and continues to be updated as new programs and information emerges. COVID-19 related webpages were added to the Middlesex County website by IT staff in order to consolidate and share information regarding the pandemic and related supports.

The Department of Economic Development released a COVID-19 business impact survey on March 19, 2020. By March 31, 2020, 194 responses had been received and analyzed by staff.

ANALYSIS:

While essential services continue to function, and a number of Middlesex-based, businesses remain open, their capacity has been significantly impacted by COVID-19, and business continuity is strained.

The formation of an Economic Resiliency Task Force is proposed to bring together key stakeholders to share best practices, identify gaps in supports, and plan future programming to address the continued needs of business in our community.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the attached Terms of Reference be endorsed to establish an Economic Resiliency Task Force.

Attachment

COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX
ECONOMIC RESILIENCY TASK FORCE
TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. MISSION AND MANDATE

To assist the Middlesex County business community by:

- assembling and providing access to information regarding local and senior level government supports in response to the impacts of COVID-19
- working together to identify and find solutions to potential gaps in business supports to lessen the impacts of COVID-19
- facilitating economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic

2. OBJECTIVES

The Task Force shall provide assistance, guidance and recommendations to County staff and Council in circumstances where the Committee's involvement can benefit County deliberations and decisions with respect to economic resiliency and recovery directly related to the impacts of COVID-19.

4. COMPOSITION

The size of the Task Force shall be at the discretion of the Co-Chairs but, shall be limited to a maximum of twelve (12) members at any one time; a maximum of two (2) of whom shall be members of County Council. The Co-Chairs will be included in the total number of members.

Appointees shall be selected on the basis of their expertise (formal education, connection and/or credentials) in an area specifically relevant to the mandate of the Task Force and/or accountability for some aspect of economic development in their current position. The following groups will be sought to be represented on the Task Force.

- Workforce development
- Employment services
- Agriculture
- Tourism
- Manufacturing
- Small Business
- Finance
- Lower tier municipalities

Members will be appointed for the term of the Task Force or until their successors are appointed.

5. COMPENSATION

Council members appointed to the Task Force shall be compensated in accordance with the existing policies of the County of Middlesex.

6. REPORTING

The Middlesex Economic Resiliency Task Force shall provide updates to County Council through the Director Economic Development. The presentation of Task Force activities shall be in the form of an Update Report containing a record of those present at the meeting, the items considered and any recommendations of the Task Force. The Task Force shall report to County Council on a monthly basis.

7. RESOURCES

County staff will provide administrative support, including the preparation of any reports to the Committee of the Whole, distribution of agendas and the general administrative co-ordination of the meetings. The Director of Economic Development will provide support in the form of advice, updates on issues that may affect the County and assistance in the implementation of any accepted recommendations as directed by Council.

8. MEETINGS

The Task Force will meet as directed by the Co-Chairs. Meetings will take place monthly at a minimum but, more often as needed, at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.

9. PROCEDURE

The Task Force shall operate by consensus.

The Task Force does not have the authority to specifically direct the activities of County staff or Council.

10. CHAIR OF THE TASK FORCE

The Task Force shall be Co-Chaired by the presiding Warden of Middlesex County and the Director of Economic Development.

11. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Members shall disclose the pecuniary interest to the Task Force and remove themselves from meetings for the duration of discussion with respect to that matter.

12. LOCATION OF MEETINGS

Meetings of the Task Force will normally be conducted electronically. When permitted and deemed necessary, meetings of the Task Force will take place at the Middlesex County Administration Building at 399 Ridout Street, London, Ontario.

13. TIMEFRAME

The Task Force will be established for a period of six months following approval by Council. Continuation of the Task Force may be extended at the direction of the Co-Chairs and the approval of Council.

Approved by Middlesex County Council on _____, 2020.