



The Municipality of Huron East
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
for the
MUNICIPALITY OF HURON EAST
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGIC PLAN

Sealed proposals to be addressed to Brad McRoberts, Chief Administrative Officer,
Municipality of Huron East, 72 Main Street South, Seaforth, ON N0K 1W0, marked
“RESPONSE TO RFP FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN” and to be
received until **noon (12:00 pm) EST January 26, 2022.**

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MUNICIPALITY OF HURON EAST
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (“RFP”)

A. General Description of Project

The Municipality of Huron East is issuing the Request for Proposal (“RFP”) to identify qualified economic development consulting firms for the preparation of an Economic Development Strategic Plan. The Municipality seeks an economic development firm that has experience in the systematic approach to the preparation and implementation of economic development strategies in an agricultural and rural-based municipality through undertaking a comprehensive strategic planning exercise. It is expected that the selected firm will prepare a Strategic Plan that contains economic development goals, strategies and performance measures. The Municipality also requires the Strategic Plan to contain an Implementation Plan, outlining a prioritization of short-term and long-term Implementation Actions and the timing, anticipated cost, funding source and lead or ‘champion’ of each Implementation Action. The selected consultant will be one that has demonstrated experience in the preparation of municipality and community-wide economic development and a proven track record in business expansion, attraction and retention, entrepreneurship, and tourism. This should also be complemented with links to education for community career path creation opportunities. The purpose of this RFP is to solicit responses from economic development consulting firms wishing to be considered for this project to enhance the Municipality and ensure its well-being.

The purpose of the project is to develop a comprehensive multi-year Strategic Economic Development Plan for Huron East. The Plan will provide direction, outline goals and outcomes for the municipality's initiatives, including but not limited to, achieving an environment conducive to attracting new and diverse businesses, as well as retaining and supporting expansion of current businesses.

B. Goals

The Economic Development Strategic Plan should have the following general goals:

- i. Create employment opportunities for local residents through expansion of existing industry/businesses, attraction of new industry/businesses and creation of small home/farm-based entrepreneurial enterprises.

- ii. Enhance capital investment in the Municipality and increase opportunities through the expansion and diversification of the communities' current economic base.
- iii. Provide for social development through education, skills training and career path creation.
- iv. Position the Municipality to effectively compete and anticipate future development needs.
- v. Increase residential, commercial and industrial development.
- vi. Increase the Municipality's revenues to support needed services.
- vii. Build and sustain collaborative partnerships with all entities involved in improving the Municipality's economy, workforce development and business expansion, attraction and retention.

C. Background

Huron East is a municipality in Southwestern Ontario with a population of approximately 9,000 people. Huron East formed in 2001 through the amalgamation of the Town of Seaforth, Townships of Tuckersmith, McKillop, Grey and the Village of Brussels. The area has a strong agricultural focus including farming and agri-food businesses. The Municipality has established industrial parks in Seaforth, Brussels and Vanastra.

The Municipality of Huron East is undertaking a multi-stage process leading to the development of a Corporate and Community-based Strategic Plan. Steps through this process include, or may include, development of an Economic Development Strategic Plan, Asset Management Plan, Service Review, Communications Plan, Master Recreation Plan, and a Master Transportation Plan.

D. Contact

Questions regarding this RFP should contact:

Brad McRoberts, MPA, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of Huron East
72 Main Street South
Seaforth, ON
N0K 1W0
Ph. No. (519-527-0160 ext. 27)
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E. Proposed Project Schedule

RFP Issued	December 1, 2021
Deadline for Proposed Submission	January 26, 2022 at 12:00 pm EST
Opening of Proposals	January 26, 2022 at 12:15 pm EST
Possible Presentations	February 9, 2022
Decision of Council	February 15, 2022
Start Date for Delivery of Services	February 28, 2022
Delivery of Draft Strategic Plan to Staff	May 25, 2022
Delivery of Draft Strategic Plan to EDC	June 8, 2022
Presentation of Draft Strategic Plan to Council	June 15, 2022
Delivery of Final Strategic Plan	June 30, 2022

F. Scope of Services

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, 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, County of Huron Planning and Economic Development Departments, Seaforth BIA.
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, County Economic Development, Huron East Chamber of Commerce and other groups and stakeholders in Huron East and other regional economic development groups (e.g. WOWC) to identify and understand how the municipality can work collaboratively for complementary growth.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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 Municipality of Huron East 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.
10. 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.

11. Assist the CAO in developing a job description for an Economic Development Officer position.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. Present the Economic Development Strategic Plan for Council's consideration and approval.
15. 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, 2022. In addition, an executive summary and Power Point presentation of the final report in electronic version will also be submitted.

G. Consultant Requirements

Minimum requirements by the consultant for submission of a proposal in response to the RFP include the following:

- 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.

H. Work Schedule

The Consultant's work schedule will begin immediately upon award of contract and is expected to continue until the Council approves the acceptance of a complete plan. A proposed work schedule for the Strategic Plan process must be submitted as part of the proposal to ensure completeness of the process and all invoices to be submitted by August 31, 2022.

I. RFP Proposal Submission Requirements

Consultants interested in providing these services must prepare and submit a Proposal that includes:

a. Cover Letter

The cover letter is to be signed by an officer of the company authorized to execute a contract with the Municipality.

b. Consultant Qualifications

This section shall describe the areas of expertise of current permanent staff whether a sole proprietor or individuals on a team and the scope of services that can be provided by the firm without the services of contractors under the consultant's direction.

c. Key Personnel

Include a proposed project management structure. Identify the key contact for the project and all personnel, if applicable, who will be assigned to work on this project, including a description of their abilities, qualifications and experience. Include resumes for all key individuals. There can be no change of key personnel once the proposal is submitted without the prior written approval of the Municipality.

d. Subcontractors

Identify any portion of the scope of work that will be subcontracted. Include firm qualifications and key personnel, telephone number and contact person for all subcontractors. The Municipality reserves the right to approve or reject all consultants or internal staff performing consulting services, proposed by the consultant during or after the consultant review and selection process.

e. Project Work Plan

A description of project understanding, detailed work approach and methodology will be identified. The work plan should list specific tasks and any specific considerations, options or alternatives.

f. Project Schedule

Propose a timeline for completion for the Strategy including start date, milestones and target date of completion. Any assumptions regarding turnaround time for Municipal Council or staff review should be clearly noted.

g. Budget

Provide a detailed fee proposal by task for the services identified in the Scope of Services Section of this proposal. Identify sub-tasks and the respective cost in your fee proposal as necessary. This section of your proposal shall include a professional fee schedule (hourly fee chart) for the consultant (and if applicable the consultant's personnel) and the subcontractor's key personnel identified above who would be working on this project. Hourly fees for additional or optional services that may be required shall also be included. Unless specified in the submission, the professional fee schedule shall include any costs associated with complying with the Municipality's insurance requirements. Identify the fee that will be charged for additional public or Municipal Council meetings not identified in the scope of services provided here.

h. References

A list of projects completed by the proposer under which services similar to those required by this RFP were performed shall be listed in your proposal. An emphasis should be placed on projects undertaken within the last five (5) years and if those projects undertaken for municipalities of similar sized communities. Include a brief description of the services, dates the services were provided and name and telephone number or references familiar with the services provided.

i. Work Samples

Provide brief descriptions of two projects dealing with economic development, master plans or similar topics prepared by or under the direction of your firm. Include in your description the techniques used in the planning process and the outcome(s).

j. Presentation

Proposers may be requested to be available for an interview with Municipal staff and possibly with the Economic Development Advisory Committee as part of the final selection process. The lead member(s) of the consulting team will be expected to attend any interviews scheduled with the Municipality.

k. Deadline and Delivery

Seven (7) bound copies of the proposal on 8 ½ inches x 11 inches paper printed on both sides of the pages and an electronic PDF version of the proposal shall be submitted to the Municipality of Huron East, 72 Main Street South, Seaforth, ON N0K 1W0 to the Attention of: Brad McRoberts, Chief Administrative Officer. The deadline for the submission of a Proposal is January 26, 2022 at noon EST. No information submitted by facsimile or electronic mail (**except for the electronic PDF copy**) will be accepted unless otherwise requested by the Municipality during the proposal review process. Proposals received after noon EST on January 26, 2022 will not be accepted.

J. Indemnification, Hold Harmless and Insurance Requirements

In addition to other standard contractual terms, the Municipality will require the selected vendor to comply with indemnification, hold harmless and insurance requirements as outlined below:

Consultant shall indemnify and hold the Municipality, its officials, employees and volunteers harmless from any and all claims, injuries, damages, losses or suits including solicitor's fees, arising out of or resulting from the acts, errors, or omissions of the Consultant in performance of this contract, except for injuries and damages caused by the sole negligence of the Municipality.

The vendor shall procure and maintain, for the duration of this contract, insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damages to property which may arise from or in connection with the performance of the work hereunder by the Contractor, his/her agents, representatives, employees or subcontractors. The cost of such insurance shall be paid by the Contractor. Insurance shall meet or exceed the following unless otherwise approved by the Municipality.

Insurance Requirements

1. Worker's Compensation coverage as required by the Province of Ontario.
2. Comprehensive or Commercial General Liability: \$2,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, personal injury and property damage.

3. Automobile Liability: \$2,000,000 combined single limit per accident for bodily injury and property damage.

K. Equal Opportunity

The Municipality is an equal opportunity employer and requires all Proposers to comply with policies and regulations concerning equal opportunity. The Proposer, in the performance of this contract, agrees not to discriminate in its employment due to an employee's or applicant's race, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual preference, age, physical handicap or any other characteristic protected by law.

L. Accessibility

The Municipality is committed to and working toward ensuring municipal services are accessible to all. We strive to meet or exceed the standards set by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* ("AODA") which are rules established by the Province to help businesses and organizations identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. The AODA requires accessibility of goods, services, facilities, accommodations, employment as well as information and communication.

M. Sustainability

The Municipality recognizes that environmental responsibility is essential to long-term economic prosperity and the social well-being of its residents and interchangeably economic development can contribute to sustainability through community engagement and involvement.

N. Review and Evaluation Process

Consultant selection will be based upon a qualitative review of the Proposals submitted. Municipal staff may request additional clarifying information from any or all consultants that submit a Proposal during the review process. Municipal staff will evaluate the responses to this RFP and may along with members of the Economic Development Committee, interview the top-rated consultants or all consultants. Following the interview, a recommendation will be made to the Municipal Council on the selection of the consultant determined to be the most qualified for the project. It is anticipated that the Municipality of Huron East and the selected Consultant will enter into a professional services contract for the time period beginning mid- December through to project completion.

An evaluation by municipal staff will review and score the written proposals. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Experience and Qualifications (40 %)
 - a. Economic Development

- b. Planning and Project Management
 - c. Resumes
 - d. References
2. Approach (40%)
- a. Quality of the Consultant's Economic Development Approach
 - b. Proposed Frameworks and Methodologies
 - c. Type of Community Consultation Activities and Events
 - d. Timeline and Duration
 - e. Implementation Plan
3. Budget (20%)

O. Accept or Reject Proposal

The Municipality reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and recommendations and may waive minor errors or omissions in any proposal. The Municipality reserves the right to select a Consultant, who in the Municipality's opinion, and upon Council's approval provides the most advantageous solution and demonstrates their ability to provide the expected outcomes of the proposals that will best serve the interests of the Municipality. Southwest Middlesex is not obligated to award the contract based on the lowest price or any other particular factor. The Municipality will not be liable or reimburse any firm for the costs they incur to prepare their proposals. The Municipality also reserves the right to substitute components where the Municipality considers that an alternative may be more suitable and the right to modify any and all requirements stated in the RFP at any time prior to the possible awarding of the contract.

P. Ownership of Intellectual Materials

All data collected and all resulting reports and publications prepared by the successful firm will be the exclusive property of the Municipality of Huron East who reserves ownership rights to all ideas and concepts developed.

Q. Termination of Contract

Either the Consultant or Municipality may terminate the contract, once awarded, at any time upon giving notice in writing at least thirty days prior to the date of termination without penalty or recourse. In the event of such termination, the Consultant will be paid for services up to and including the date of termination.

***Thank you for your interest in the Municipality of Huron East Economic
Development Strategic Plan!***