**Subject:** Kincardine and Bruce County Grant Partnership Report

**Report Number:** Economic Development-2020-05

**Meeting Date:** Monday, July 6, 2020

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** Recommendation:** THAT, as outlined in Economic Development-2020-05, The Economic Development Strategic Plan budget amount of $31,000.00 be moved to Kincardine and Bruce County Grant Partnership AND FURTHER THAT Community Development Officer, Jenna Ujiye, work with Bruce County to prepare a Kincardine and Bruce County Grant Partnership sharing agreement.

**Date to be considered by Council:** Monday, July 6, 2020

**Report Summary:**

At the June 16 Municipality of Kincardine Council meeting staff were asked to look into the opportunities to partner with Bruce County on the Spruce the Bruce and Business Pivot/Adaptation Grant. The grants had been expanded in order to help as many businesses as possible during the pandemic. Staff worked with the Economic Development Policy Chair, CAO, Clerk, Tourism Coordinator and Bruce County staff to compile options and recommendations. Both the Spruce the Bruce and Business Pivot/Adaptation grants were oversubscribed, and the additional dollars could support up to 10 more businesses in projects that will help business to open, be safe and expand during the pandemic.

**Origin:** Request from June 15, 2020 Council Meeting

**Existing Policy:** N/A

**Background/Analysis:**
The Kincardine Business Pandemic Survey, presented on April 27th, 2020 indicated on page 2 that 59.5% of the respondents needed support with relief and funding for their businesses moving forward and 63.5% of respondents said that cashflow and lack of revenue were their major concerns. Staff and Economic Development Policy Chair have looked over the 2020 Economic Development budget and have found that readjusting the budget to partner with the County of Bruce on the Spruce the Bruce and Business Pivot/Adaptation grants would be
the most beneficial use of dollars to support businesses located in the Municipality of Kincardine.

Spruce the Bruce Grant Details
To support local businesses in making COVID-19 related modifications, the 2020 Spruce the Bruce grants have been amended for 2020. Matching funding requirements have been removed the total available funding for the program has been increased to $250,000. These grants are specific to three main areas: Façade Improvement and Patio Installation, Perpendicular Signage or Awning Installation and Collaborative Marketing. For more information visit: https://brucecounty.on.ca/business/grants

Business Pivot/Adaptation Grant Details
Funded through the Starter Company Plus program. By applying and being approved an individual will receive a hands-on training and mentorship program that gives entrepreneurs an up to $5,000 grant, resources, knowledge, and guidance to expand, enhance, or adapt their existing business. For more information visit: https://brucecounty.on.ca/business/grants/starter-company-plus-grant

Current Status of Bruce County Grants
Spruce the Bruce: 17 businesses located within the Community Improvement Plan (CIC) have applied. Nine of the grants have been approved so far totalling $42,000.00. The County allotment for the Municipality is $30,000.00, and the current application total is sitting at $42,000.00. This mean that there is a waitlist of approximate $12,000.00 and more businesses could apply at any time. If we added $16,000.00 it would pay for the current submitted applications and one more application after that.

Business Pivot/Adaptation grant – This grant was launched on June 18, 2019 and applications were due on June 25. In total 69 applications were received by June 23 and the dollars are being granted on a first come first served basis. Knowing that the program is oversubscribed already adding and extra $15,000.00 to the allotted $25,000.00 would allow another three business to move forward with projects.

Other County Grants Update- Three businesses have been approved for loans. Six businesses have applied for the tourism innovation lab grant and are in the review process.

Creating a Grant Program by Municipality of Kincardine – There could be a possibility of moving forward with starting a Municipal granting program. After researching this opportunity, staff found that due to the regulations within the Municipal Act and the Planning Act, the only businesses that would fall into the requirements would have to be part of the CIC. This would mean that any businesses outside of downtown Kincardine would not be able to apply. This
would not solve the problem of supporting the businesses across the entire Municipality.

**Agreement with the County of Bruce** – Community Development Officer, Jenna Ujiye, will work with Bruce County to prepare a Kincardine and Bruce County Grant Partnership sharing agreement. The Spruce the Bruce grant portion of the partnership agreement will cover the applications that the existing Bruce County budget could not cover. There is opportunity for one more business to apply (as of June 25, 2020) in which County of Bruce Staff would confer with Municipality of Kincardine staff to approve the final funding allotment.

The Business Pivot/Adaptation grants are on a first come served basis. So the first 5 grants from Municipality of Kincardine will be approved at the County level. The further 6 possible grants will be decided on through guidance from the Community Development Officer and County Staff.

A partnership agreement will be written once the final Business Pivot/Adaptation Grant Information has been compiled at the County level.

**Community Plan and Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) Considerations:**

**Financial Implications:** The current budget line called Economic Development Strategic Plan will be changed to Kincardine and Bruce County Partnership.

**Attachments:**