

To: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Brad Hammond, Development Commissioner

Re: Request for Early Budget Approval for Strategic Planning

AIM

To seek City Council's early budget approval for funding for an Economic Development strategic plan.

BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2025 staff in the Development Office filed an application with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness for support under the Rural Ontario Development Program (RODP). The request was for \$50,000 of funding toward a \$100,000 strategic planning project. The cost estimate for this project is based on estimates provided for guidance by industry experts.

Staff have requested \$50,000 of funding in the City's Revenue Fund Budget toward this project as matching funds.

COMMENTS

While the Province of Ontario is still in the midst of evaluating Woodstock's application, they have asked for verification that the City's share of the funding has been secured and is available. In order to avoid any delays in further review and approval Development staff are requesting that Council provide early budget approval for \$50,000 for this project in advance the City's normal budget approval process.

These funds are proposed to come from the City's Industrial Land Reserve and, as a result, will not have a direct impact on the 2026 tax levy. While the Industrial land reserve is typically used for costs related to purchasing and servicing new industrial land, strategic planning for economic development is an important part of building the local economy and the City's successful track record in industrial attraction.

ATTACHMENTS

None

RECOMMENDATION

That Woodstock City Council approve \$50,000 in the 2026 Revenue Budget for consultant fees associated with the development of an Economic Development strategic plan and that the funds be taken from the Industrial Land Reserve Fund.

Authored by: Brad Hammond, Development Commissioner

Approved by: Brad Hammond, Development Commissioner

Approved by: David Creery, P. Eng, MBA, Chief Administrative Officer