



TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HURON

REPORT

Item No.

REPORT TO: Reeve Vincent and Members of Council
PREPARED BY: Sharon Chambers
DATE: 21/02/2017
SUBJECT: Richard Levan Airport – Huron County Airport Feasibility Study
ATTACHMENTS: none

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Council of the Township of North Huron hereby accepts the report of the CAO concerning the Huron County Airport Feasibility Study for information purposes;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorizes the Economic Development Officer to submit an application to the Huron County Economic Development Partnership program for North Huron's share of the Huron County Airport Feasibility Study.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County of Huron conducted a SWOT analysis as part of their Economic Development Strategic Planning process. The County's "Big Five" challenges are described in the Huron County Economic Development Plan, 2016 – 2020. Challenge #4 identified the need to invest in and support strategic infrastructure, such as municipal airports.

Acting Huron County Director of Economic Development, Andrew Kemp has put together a Request for Proposals to hire a consultant to conduct a study which will examine potential economic development opportunities for the Goderich and Wingham airports. This would include the investigation of potential new revenue streams, as well as exploring opportunities for collaboration and sharing of expertise.

The County has included funds in the 2017 budget for the study, however they are requesting that the Town of Goderich and the Township of North Huron both submit funding requests to the Huron County Economic Development Partnership program to offset part of the cost of the study.

The HEDP application is due on March 1st, 2017

DISCUSSION

The Huron County Economic Development Plan states;

"One of the big challenges for smaller jurisdictions such as Huron County can be the quality of its infrastructure – a lack of scale can limit demand and investment for infrastructure that supports economic activity such as ports, airports, highways, industrial parks, broadband, etc. Despite its size, the County needs a plan to support strategic infrastructure assets."

County Airports: Huron County is home to 3 airports: the Wingham Airport, the Goderich Airport, and the Centralia Airport. The Wingham and Goderich airports are municipal airports; both are authorized airports of entry (AOE/15 authorized) capable of providing clearance for all classes of

scheduled and non-scheduled aircraft (passenger and cargo) where the passenger capacity, including crew, does not exceed 15 people. The Centralia Airport (Huron Air Park, formerly CFB Centralia) is the largest private airfield in Southwestern Ontario. It is located 15 minutes west of Exeter. It has two paved and lighted runways; the main asphalt runway is 5012 feet long and the other is 4400 feet long.

Action Item:

Aircraft maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) facilities are becoming more common at secondary airports because of lower costs, less congestion, and other benefits (similar to the services offered by New United Goderich Inc. at the Centralia/James T. Field Memorial Airport). The County will work with the proponents of each of the three airports to assess potential economic development opportunities.”

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Township will not be able to apply to HEDP in 2017 for other Economic Development Projects. The study may identify new revenue sources for the airport which could reduce or eliminate the annual operating deficit and allow for investment toward long term capital needs.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

GOAL # 4 - Our administration is fiscally responsible and strives for operational excellence.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sharon Chambers', is written over a horizontal line.

Sharon Chambers, CAO