

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 3, 2021**

A Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee convened on Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 7:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC with the following persons present:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:	Councillor Steve Kim, Chair Councillor Trish Mandewo, Vice Chair Kathy Banner Marko Dekovic Emma Friess Michael Hind, Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce Lilian Kan Cody Muhle Mladen Plecko Araz Rismani (arrived at 7:15 p.m.) Kevin Volz Njeri Watkins Catherine Williams, Douglas College Coquitlam Campus
REGRETS:	J. Brad Marko Georgiy Sekretaryuk
STAFF:	Curtis Scott, Acting Manager Economic Development Eric Kalnins, Tourism Manager Julie Hunter, Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

1. Welcome and Introductions

Roundtable introductions were held and the Chair welcomed members back to the Committee.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2. Minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, November 25, 2020

The Minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, November 25, 2020 were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

3. 2021 Work Plan Approval

The Chair provided comments relative to the Committee's 2021 Work Plan.

The Committee recommended:

**COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approve the 2021 Economic Development Advisory Committee Work Plan.

4. COVID-19 – Business Supports Program (Community Support and Recovery Plan)

The Acting Manager Economic Development provided introductory comments relative to the City's Business Supports program. He and the Manager Tourism provided a presentation entitled "Economic Development – Business Recovery and Supporting Local" and referred to slides titled as follows:

- Community Support and Recovery Plan
- Supporting Local Business: 2020 Recap
- Taste of the Tri-Cities – On Now
- Temporary Outdoor Space Expansion
- Seasonal Campaigns
- BCEDA Award Nomination
- Comments and Feedback

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The current focus on promoting "Support Local" during the coronavirus pandemic, and the potential to market outside of the Tri-Cities once PHO restrictions on travel have been lifted or changed
- Actions taken by the City to facilitate the temporary outdoor expansion of businesses
- The pros and cons of delivery services such as Skip the Dishes
- The understanding that meal delivery is available through companies such as Legends Haul
- Feedback indicating that the City has done a good job of supporting local businesses during the pandemic
- The success of the City's seasonal campaigns
- Uncertainty regarding how long the coronavirus pandemic will last or how long restrictions will be in place, and the desire to build on the current business support initiatives

- The success of the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce in supporting businesses during the pandemic
- Support for promoting local businesses by doing regular features via social media channels and in the newspaper
- The intent to continue increasing the engagement of small, lesser known businesses in the City's business support programs, to raise public awareness of these entities, and to include businesses of all ethnicities
- The potential to engage students in a program through which they provide marketing and social media support to restaurants who are otherwise not equipped to focus on this area
- The desire to communicate the opportunities available to youth and employers through the Canada Summer Jobs program
- The increase in business-to-business communication since the start of the pandemic
- The potential to obtain testimonials and engage ambassadors from the local business community
- The understanding that the restaurant industry has been one of the hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic
- The intent to provide greater support to the other business sectors that have been impacted by the pandemic, including the hotel / hospitality industry, the fitness industry, and the retail industry
- The potential for students in Douglas College's Business Management summer intern program to assist local businesses with marketing and social media

Committee members were invited to contact staff with ideas for supporting local businesses.

The Committee received the COVID-19 – Business Supports Program report for information.

5. Developing the Environment for Entrepreneurship and the Technology Sector

The Acting Manager Economic Development provided a recap and status update regarding the Technology Sub-Committee. Ms. N. Watkins set out the next steps for the Sub-Committee.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Sub-Committee's work
- The need for further data and the development of a critical path

Ms. K. Banner left the meeting at this time (8:15 p.m.)

- How the work of the Sub-Committee aligns with the Coquitlam 2019-2024 Technology Strategy, the broader Economic Development Strategy and the City's Business Plan
- The importance of planning for post-COVID

- Whether the goal is to increase the technology capabilities of existing businesses or to attract technology sector businesses
- The desire to clarify the focus of the Sub-Committee
- Business retention and expansion
- The intent to focus on specific sectors that would be attracted to Coquitlam's existing ecosystem
- The desire to focus on entrepreneurship
- The need to provide attractive locations for businesses
- The "digital nomad" culture
- How Coquitlam is currently perceived by the tech community and what major tech firms are currently in the city
- How Coquitlam can reposition its brand and identity to specific tech industries
- Competition from other municipalities for attracting the tech industry
- The next steps

It was agreed that the Sub-Committee would have a further meeting and report back to the Committee at its next meeting. The Chair thanked members of the Sub-Committee for their contributions.

6. Economic Data and Statistics (Standing Item)

The Acting Manager Economic Development provided background information relative to the Economic Data and Statistics standing agenda item.

7. Emerging Issues (Standing Item)

Members of the Committee were encouraged to report back with their observations, innovative ideas for supporting local business, events or initiatives that the City could support, and potential recommendations.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The importance of being forward thinking, contemplate possible changes to how economic activity and business occurs, and prepare for post-pandemic
- Concern related to the negative impact on businesses in close proximity to the homeless shelter at 3030 Gordon
- The expectation that many people will continue to work and study remotely after the pandemic
- The understanding that there is funding available from the federal and provincial governments to support the employment of students in their field of study

Mr. A. Rismani left the meeting at this time (8:54 p.m.)

- Fraud and identity theft and the importance of safe online job search practices

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Mr. M. Dekovic left the meeting at this time (8:55 p.m.)

- How the coronavirus pandemic has impacted post-secondary students

OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING DATE – May 26, 2021

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFIED CORRECT

CHAIR



Julie Hunter
Committee Clerk