

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL 2022-006 REGIONAL COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN BACKGROUND STUDY & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

1. Background Information

The County of Frontenac, herein after called the “County” is a rural upper tier municipality located in Eastern Ontario extending from the islands south of the City of Kingston to the southern boundary of Renfrew County, near the town of Calabogie. Island businesses and residents rely on ferry transportation in order to move back and forth to the mainland. The total population of the County is approximately 29,295 over an area of 3,200 square kilometres, including the lower-tier Townships of North Frontenac, Central Frontenac, South Frontenac, and Frontenac Islands.

The County is governed by an 8-member Council with the Warden being the head of Council. Two representatives from each constituent Township sit on Council including its mayor and one other member which is currently selected by the local council members.

The County manages the operations of Corporate Services, Planning & Economic Development, Fairmount Home, Frontenac Paramedic Services and the Frontenac-Howe Islander Ferry. The County employs approximately 400 people under three different union contracts.

A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is a tool that allows a municipality to direct funds and implement policy initiatives toward a specifically defined project area. Community Improvement Plans are intended to encourage revitalization initiatives and/or stimulate development and redevelopment. CIPs are enabled through Part IV of the Ontario Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990. Through prior efforts of the County, Frontenac is one of only eight upper-tier municipalities that have authority under Ontario Regulation 221/07 to implement a regional CIP.

As part of the 2022-2026 Budget and Business Plan presentations, County Council approved a project proposal to complete a County-wide Community Improvement Plan Study. The purpose of this project is to review the current suite of community improvement plans available in Frontenac County, and to make recommendations on the best approach to establishing a County-wide plan, providing incentives for investment throughout the region.

Since 2012, Frontenac County has established 5 Community Improvement Plans with respective project areas. While the County led the initial development of each plan, the Townships have been responsible for administration and updates to each plan.

- Verona (2012 – No longer available)
- Sharbot Lake (2012)
- Marysville (2013)

- Harrowsmith (2016)
- North Frontenac (updated 2021)

To date, the only program available in a regional fashion is the North Frontenac Community Improvement Plan – the other plans are limited to main streets and settlement areas within the named villages.

2. Scope of the Proposal

Intent of the Project

The purpose of this project is to review the current suite of community improvement plans available in Frontenac County, and to make recommendations on the best approach to establishing a County-wide plan, providing incentives for investment throughout the region.

The County seeks the services of a qualified consultant or team to achieve the following objectives:

1. **Review of existing Community Improvement Programs and related policies in Frontenac County**

The consultant will review the existing community improvement plans and evaluate the performance of such plans, including the number of applications and the return on investment of public funds. This review will also recommend changes that ensure alignment with the forthcoming regional plan, including the stacking of incentives and/or the elimination of duplicate programs with an opportunity to look at a streamlined application process to funnel all applications through one process.

2. **Establish Community Vision and Economic Development Priorities**

The [2020 Service Delivery Review](#) of Frontenac Economic Development outlined four key opportunities to make better use of existing resources in the Economic Development Department. The first recommendation was for the County to establish concrete priorities for Economic Development, ideally determining the underlying reason for Economic Development activities and setting outcomes to work towards and contribute to through those activities. Currently the Economic Development Team is guided by the [Charter for Economic Development](#), established in 2015. As part of the priority setting requirement for a Community Improvement Plan, staff propose a visioning exercise to update the charter and define a new set of clear priorities.

With consultant support, County staff will lead a series of workshops to clarify a vision for Frontenac communities. These workshops will be facilitated in partnership with the Townships and Frontenac Business Services and include diverse representation of various business sectors and perspectives, with the goal of determining “What do we want our community to be?” These workshops will also identify related outcomes or indicators that demonstrate progress towards that result.

The results of the visioning will be presented to the community at large to confirm the vision and prioritize related outcomes. County Council will be included in the process and confirm the proposed vision and priorities. These priorities will be used to define the

types of programs and incentives offered through the County-wide CIP. Such priorities could include a range of options from environmental initiatives to housing and more traditional projects such as façade improvement.

The consultant team and County staff will collaborate on the approach to the agenda for the visioning sessions, including but not limited to presentations or tools to be used.

The consultant will participate in the workshops to receive the input from participants, document and summarize comments to draft the update to the charter and define a new set of priorities for Frontenac County, Economic Development.

County staff will set up the workshops, either in-person or virtually, facilitate the sessions with partners, lead the communication about the workshops, add content to the Engage Frontenac (www.EngageFrontenac.ca) site for engagement and the County of Frontenac website (www.FrontenacCounty.ca).

The proposed timelines are included in the Timeline section and will be confirmed with the consultant.

3. **Review of Industry Best Practices**

The consultant will recommend a suite of potential incentive programs and tools that can be used to achieve the goals established through the priority setting process, including recommendations for funding, and administering these programs.

Key best practices to be reviewed include:

a. **Types of Incentives**

There are a number of grant programs, rebates and other incentives offered by municipalities as part of their respective CIP initiatives. These programs may be offered to reduce certain barriers to development or to encourage certain types of investment within the priorities established by the CIP program. They can include matching grants, loan programs, tax-incremental equivalent grants, municipal services, or even business coaching. In addition to cataloguing types of programs, the consultant will provide analysis on which types of programs that are most effective and well utilised.

b. **Collaboration between Regions (Counties) and Municipalities (Townships)**

The consultant will examine different methods of collaboration between regions and their respective municipalities in terms of CIP coordination and delivery in order to select the approach that is the best fit in Frontenac County.

c. **Performance Measurement of CIP programs**

Performance measurement can be used to evaluate the suitability of applications to the program through scoring, as well as to determine the level of eligibility a successful application may have for the program. For example, an application that meets multiple priorities and scores high on each priority could be considered for

additional incentives. Incentive levels may also be determined based on investment amounts, which would factor into the scoring.

In addition, the performance measurement of the CIP program helps communicate to Council and the community on the effectiveness of the program and the return on investment for successful applications. These measurements can inform adjustments to the program during regular review periods.

d. **Unique Programs**

While CIP programs are used widely across Ontario to promote investment, some programs make use of unique policies, partnerships or other approaches to further the goals of the municipality. The consultant will provide 3-5 case studies of unique programs that stand out for their strategic use or unique approach.

4. **Presentation of County-wide CIP Recommendations & Implementation Strategy**

Once the above tasks have been completed, the consultant will work with the project team to develop a set of recommendations along with an implementation strategy for presentation to the Community Development Advisory Committee and, subsequently, County Council for approval.

Recommendations will include but not be limited to:

- Potential amendments to existing CIP Plans
- Potential amendments to the County Official Plan
- Policies and programs for a County-wide Community Improvement Plan (CCIP)
- Recommended financial plan to fund and administer the CCIP
- Recommendations for coordination between economic development partners on program delivery, both at local and county levels.

Once County Council has received the recommendation and Implementation Strategy, it will determine if implementation should proceed.

Timelines:

- Award – April 8, 2022
- Startup Meeting with Project Management Team – Monday April 18, 2022
- Priority Setting and Visioning Workshops - May & June, 2022
- Visioning and Priority Confirmation Exercise – July 2022
- Draft Report to County Administration– September 19, 2022
- Presentation to County Council – To Be Determined (Q1 2023)
- Partner Debriefing - (TBD)

Deliverables

Three deliverables are expected:

- One briefing to County Council describing the results of the review
- One stakeholder meeting to discuss results and next steps for implementation

- Digital copies (Microsoft Office and PDF formats) of the final report, background material and presentations, summary of comments received. Documents provided by the consultant to be posted on the website or Engage Frontenac, must be Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.

3. Proposal Process

3.1 Schedule of Events

The following timeline has been established for the Proposal selection process:

Request for Proposals - Action	Date
Request for Proposals Issued	Monday March 7, 2022
Deadline for Questions	Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.
Deadline for Proposal Submission	Friday, March 25, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.
Interviews (via Video Conference)	Thursday March 31, 2022 or Friday April 1, 2022
Notification of Award	Friday April 8, 2022
Completion Date	Friday December 2, 2022** Revisions may be required after Council review in 1 st Quarter 2023
Presentation to County Council	To Be Determined – 1 st Quarter 2023

3.2 Date and Place for Receiving Proposals

Proposals will be received no later than 3:00 p.m. local time on Friday, March 25, 2022

PROPOSALS MAY ONLY BE SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL

and clearly marked:

RFP 2022-006 Regional Community Improvement Plan Background Study & Implementation Strategy

Email: ap@frontenacounty.ca

All proposal submissions are appreciated. However, the County will be contacting only those selected for an interview.

3.3 Documentation

- The submission must not be more than twenty (20) pages (excluding appendices)
- All proposals must be legible and typewritten.
- A Certificate of Clearance from the Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (W.S.I.B.) certifying that the proponent is in good standing with the Board, and confirming that their account is active and up to date;
- Proof of liability insurance with a minimum limit of \$2,000,000;

3.4 Interviews

An interview will be part of the evaluation process. Please ensure your team is available on **Thursday March 31 or Friday April 1** for an interview. If selected for an interview,

your team will be required to provide a brief 10-15 minute presentation outlining the proposed approach to this project.

3.5 Negotiations

In the event that a prepared proposal does not precisely and entirely meet the County of Frontenac's requirements, the County of Frontenac reserves the right to enter into negotiations with the selected proponent(s) to arrive at a mutually satisfactory arrangement with respect to any modifications to a proposal.

3.6 Contract

The successful proponent(s) will be required to enter into a formal Contract with the County. The completed Request for Proposal will form part of the Agreement. The County will prepare the Contract document for execution by both parties. The County will not accept a Contract document prepared by the proponent(s) or a third party.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) results will be advertised on the website with only the successful proponent being contacted.

3.7 Communications

All requests for information and/or clarification as well as questions regarding the interpretation of the terms set out in this document should be emailed to ap@frontenacounty.ca.

The County reserves the right to distribute any or all questions and answers to the other proponents.

Deadline for questions: Wednesday March 16, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.

3.8 Withdrawal or Substitution of Submission

A proponent may withdraw or substitute all or part of his/her proposal at any time up to the official closing time. The last proposal received shall supersede and invalidate all proposals previously submitted by that proponent for this proposal.

A proponent may withdraw or qualify his/her proposal at any time up to the official closing time, by submitting a letter bearing the signature as in his/her proposal to the Clerk, who will mark thereon the time and date of receipt and will place the letter in the tender box. **No telephone calls or telephone transmissions by facsimile copies will be considered.**

3.9 Alterations or Variations

No alterations or variations of this document shall be valid or binding upon the County unless authorized in writing in accordance with the procedure set out in Communications 5.7.

3.10 Oral Explanation or Interpretation

No oral explanation or interpretation shall modify any of the documents or provisions of the County's request for proposal documents.

Section 4: Proposal Evaluation

4.1 Qualification evaluations will be carried out based on the following criteria:

1.	Applicable expertise and resources	20%
2.	Similar project experience	20%
3.	Proposed approach/work plan	40%
4.	Cost factor	20%
Total:		100%

The submissions will be assessed on the merits of the information provided. Proposals should address the categories listed above to enable the Review Committee to undertake adequate assessment and determine a short list for interviews. In particular, preference will be given to submissions that represent a full range of consulting expertise including, economic development, tourism, business attraction, business retention, small business development, and land use planning, with an emphasis on professionals that have experience working in a municipal environment.

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of all information provided by the proponent(s). Each proposal will be reviewed to determine if the proposal is responsive to the submission requirements outlined in the RFP. Failure to comply with these requirements may deem the proposal non-responsive.

The County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, for any reason whatsoever, and to accept or reject any proposal, if considered best for the interests of the County. The lowest bid or any proposal will not necessarily be accepted.

4.2 Review Committee

The review committee will be comprised of County staff, Township staff and may also include representatives from economic development or tourism agencies.

4.3 Acceptance of this Proposal and Contract

It is expected that one proponent will be selected. Upon selection, the successful proponent will be required to enter into a contract with the County. The contract will be based on the specifications; terms and conditions expressed in this document, the successful proponent's proposal and documented negotiations and will include the requirement of proof of professional liability insurance.

4.4 Confidentiality

The proposal must not be restricted by any statement, covering letter or alteration by the proponent(s) in respect of confidential or proprietary information. The County will treat all proposals as confidential. The County will comply with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and its retention by-law pursuant to the

Municipal Act, in respect of all proposals. All public reports approved by the Council of the County will become public information. Such public reports will not include proposal documents. The County will not return or destroy all copies of any successful proposal. All unsuccessful proposals will be destroyed within a year of determining the successful proposal.

4.5 Bid Cancellation

The County reserves the right to cancel this bid request at any time up to the Award of a Contract.

4.6 Legislative and Licensing Requirements

All proponents and proposals must comply with any law, including all legislation and regulations, which may be applicable to the services provided subsequent to the RFP.

Please be advised that a condition of the agreement will be a requirement that the successful proponent comply with the applicable laws of Ontario and Canada, including the:

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (Ontario)
Ontario Human Rights Code
Pay Equity Act (Ontario)
The Accessible Customer Service Standard.

Any agreement that results from this RFP will be subject to the laws of the Province of Ontario and Canada.

4.7 Incurred Costs

The County shall not be responsible for any liabilities, costs, expenses, loss or damage incurred, sustained or suffered by any proponent(s) prior or subsequent to or by reason of the acceptance or non-acceptance by the County of any proposal by reason of any delay in the acceptance of a proposal.

4.8 Errors and Omissions

The County shall not be held liable for any errors or omissions in any part of this RFP. While the County has used considerable effort to ensure an accurate representation of information in this RFP, the information contained in the RFP is supplied solely as a guideline for proponents. The information is not guaranteed or warranted to be accurate by the County, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive