



Staff Report

Report Title: Women in Carpentry Partnership Opportunity

Prepared By: Michelle Goetz, Community Development Officer

Department: BED

Date: Mar. 1, 2021

Report Number: BED-2021-03-12

File Number:

Attachments:

Recommendation:

That the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report Number BED2021-03-12 prepared by Michelle Goetz, Community Development Officer; AND approves moving forward with the Women in Carpentry Partnership project if the application is successful.

Background:

On February 23rd, Fanshawe representatives hosted a meeting with the Township of Huron-Kinloss, Municipality of Kincardine, Local 2222 Carpenter's Union, VPI, and the Women's House serving Grey-Bruce, to discuss the Skills Development Fund offered through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. The discussion surrounded a pilot program introducing women to carpentry.

Discussion:

Staff was invited by Fanshawe to attend this meeting as we have identified workforce planning and supporting the skilled trades in our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Action Plan, our Economic Development Action Plan and the 2021 Economic Development Business Plan.

We have heard time and time again, the need to increase the number of skilled trade workers, especially in our area, and one of the ways to do this is to diversify the employee base that typically considers trades for their career. Women are an underrepresented group in the industry, representing only 3.4% of on-site employees in the trades. The Skills Development Fund is requesting applications that will identify and reach out to these underrepresented groups through meaningful training and education opportunities.

The Women in Carpentry pilot project will be set up as a pre-apprenticeship training program. The participants will be provided with math and communications courses offered through Fanshawe college, in the shop/on-tool training through the Local 2222 Carpenter's Union and an 8-week paid work placement set-up with employers through VPI.

The Skills Development Fund offers 100% funding for the program, partners are not required to commit a financial contribution, but in-kind contributions will be expected from all partners, this may include; space rental, training facilities, mentorship or peer support, etc.

At this meeting, Fanshawe requested one of the Municipalities be the lead applicant because colleges are not eligible. After learning about the project and reviewing our action plans, we felt this project was inline with our goals and workplan for 2021.

As the lead applicant, the Township of Huron-Kinloss would be responsible to submit the application, hire a Project Coordinator (funded 100% through the grant program and supervised by the Community Development Officer), manage the budget, and ensure all reports are completed in a timely manner.

The project timeline is 1 year from the successful funding announcement (approximately April) and we hope to provide the training to 20 women in two cohorts. Due to COVID, training centres can only accommodate 10 participants at a time. Also, by dividing the program into two sessions, the partners have an opportunity to discuss what worked well and what needs improved prior to launching the second session.

Everyone who attended the meeting was supportive of the project and will be providing letters of support to attach to the grant application.

Due to the tight deadline of February 28th, 2021, staff has submitted the grant application and is looking for Council support for the project, with Huron-Kinloss as the lead applicant, if the application is successful.

Financial Impacts:

None at this time.

If the application is successful the Township will be expected to provide in-kind contributions to the project that includes supervision of the Project Coordinator, desk space and facility use at The Hub or other Township facility.

Strategic Alignment / Link:

The information provided in this report is consistent with and in keeping with the Municipality's Vision & Mission. The recommendations contribute to the goals in achieving a prosperous and an accessible community.

This project supports the following action item in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Action Plan:

A3.5 Skilled Trades Training

This project also supports the following initiatives:

Action 1.4 in the Economic Development Action Plan: Recruit and Attract workers.

Action 1.5 in the Economic Development Action Plan: Identify the future need for skilled workers.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Michelle Goetz, Community Development Officer

Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer