

Staff Report

Presented By: Kara Van Myall, Chief Administrative Officer

Meeting Date: March 24, 2025

Subject: Municipal Innovation Council Closeout Report

Attachment(s): MIC Winddown Cover Letter
MIC Closeout Report
2020-2025 MIC Impact Report

Recommendation

That Council receive the Municipal Innovation Council Closeout report for information.

Report Summary

The Municipal Innovation Council (MIC) was established in 2020 when eight municipalities in the County of Bruce came together. At its meeting on December 2, 2024, the MIC passed a motion to dissolve the Municipal Innovation Council by March 31, 2025. This report highlights the 2024 achievements and planned winddown activities within the responsibility of Saugeen Shores. Attached to this report is the 2020-2025 Impact Report celebrating the successes of the partnership.

Background/Analysis

The Municipal Innovation Council (MIC) was established in 2020 when eight municipalities in the County of Bruce came together to find savings, efficiencies and deliver services better to their residents - all with the goal of building smarter, stronger, more resilient communities.

Over its five years the MIC ran projects including: a topographical mapping project; fleet electrification initiatives; the Food Cycler program; training over 200 municipal employees on emerging workplace dynamics, support for attainable housing; a review of information technology services across member municipalities; leadership of the Smart Beach project; the Simply Brilliant Idea program, which crowdsourced solutions to municipal challenges from staff. A detailed five-year Impact Report is included in this package.

At its meeting on December 2, 2024, the MIC passed a motion to dissolve the Municipal Innovation Council by March 31, 2025. The decision was made to integrate ongoing efforts into members respective organizations, continuing to drive positive change in our communities. The following highlights the 2024 activities that will be brought into the administration at the Town.

Smart Beach – Phase 2 in Saugeen Shores

Phase 2 of Smart Beach, focused on Saugeen Shores is currently in the scoping stage between Smart Beach researchers at University of Waterloo, Georgian College and Saugeen Shores. A grant of \$340,000 has been secured for this work and it was identified in the Town's 2025 Business Plan with Community Services.

Communitech – Fast Track Cities – AI for Administrative Efficiency

Partnering with Communitech through their Fast Track Cities to undertake an “AI for Administrative Efficiency” project is currently being investigated by Corporate Services. A report will be brought back to Council to consider this project.

2020-2025 Impact Report

The Impact Report (2020-2025), attached to this report, provides a highlight the five years of significant progress MIC members achieved. Over the past five years, MIC ran projects like topographical mapping, fleet electrification, the Food Cycler program aimed at reducing household waste, training over 200 municipal employees to enhance their skills, support for attainable housing initiatives, comprehensive IT services review, the innovative Smart Beach project to improve beach safety, and the Simply Brilliant Idea program which encouraged creative solutions from member municipalities.

Financials

The Town of Saugeen Shores, as the treasurer for the MIC, will be calculating a return of surplus funds to the partner municipalities. Those funds will be calculated based on the 2023 reserve balance, 2024 surplus and the 2025 expenses (no member contributions were made in 2025).

As per the 2022-2025 Memorandum of Agreement, each participating municipality provided an annual financial contribution of a base rate of \$12,000 plus \$2.50 per household as determined by the 2016 Statistics Canada Census of Population (except for Bruce County which had a flat rate). The calculation will be a proportional entitlement based on the proportional annual contributions of each partner. Brockton's reimbursement will be based on their 2023 participation.

Saugeen Shores budgeted approximately \$31,000 in 2025 towards the MIC which will remain unspent. An internal innovation program for the Town is being explore in Q2 2025 which will be brought forward for Council consideration as part of the Business Planning process. In addition, Saugeen Shores is expected to have an approximate \$39,781 returned from MIC surplus.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 2: Building the Best Municipal Team
- Business Plan Alignment: CAO Business as Usual

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

Costs associated with this program are contained within the existing budget.

Approved By: Kara Van Myall, Chief Administrative Officer