

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 23, 2018

REQUEST FOR DECISION - TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

TOURISM GROWTH INNOVATION FUND – MOTION REQUIRED

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the County of Vermilion River direct administration to apply for the Tourism Growth Innovation Fund to complete a Destination Development: Tourism Opportunity Assessment project with the municipal contribution to be funded by the Economic Development Reserve.

DETAILS

Background: The Tourism Growth Innovation Fund is a project-based grant program that aims to support economic growth and improve quality of life in communities across Alberta and is managed by Alberta Tourism and Culture. The Destination Development stream helps tourism organizations and municipalities create new tourism products and destination development opportunities through research-based studies, surveys and plans. Preference is given to projects focused on regions outside of Edmonton, Calgary and the Rocky Mountain Parks. Project outcomes should focus on spring/fall travel seasons; nature-based tourism; cultural tourism; indigenous cultural tourism or agricultural and culinary tourism. The Fund provides up to \$75,000 for a project and applicants are required to contribute to a minimum of 25% of the total project costs.

Discussion: It is proposed that we would undertake a Tourism Opportunity Assessment. The project would utilize an external consultant to do a research-based assessment of where we are in the world of tourism, what are our opportunities and challenges, and a gap analyses of tourism products and services. The goal would be to have a guiding document that evaluates our current state and a tourism strategy moving forward. The project would look at opportunities within the County (including all the hamlets, villages and the town) and how support for the greater region (City, Lakeland, HUB, Go East, Alberta etc) can be advantageous for all. Tourism knows no boundaries, so implementing this project to generate a regional snapshot will assist all of our municipalities, tourism industry and stakeholders. Total Project estimate would be approximately \$55,000. The Grant request would be for approximately \$41,250 and municipal contribution would be approximately \$13,750.



Desired Outcome (s): To proceed with applying for the Tourism Growth Innovation Fund

Response Options: That the County of Vermilion River direct Administration to apply for the Tourism Growth Innovation Fund to complete a Destination Development: Tourism Opportunity Assessment project with municipal contribution to be funded by the Economic Development Reserve.

IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

Organizational: Planning and Development will complete and submit the application prior to the October 31, 2018 deadline. Administration will provide Planning and Development a letter of confirmation for municipal commitment and contribution to the project by October 30, 2018.

Financial: Once the grant is accepted, allocation of municipal contribution will be drawn from the Economic Development Reserve for the project.

Implementation: If successful, Planning and Development will manage and implement the project

ATTACHMENTS

1. Tourism Growth Innovation Fund Guidelines

PREPARED BY: Roger Garnett, Director of Planning & Development

DATE: October 16, 2018