

# Report to Municipal Council



<b>Meeting Date:</b> July 16, 2025	<b>Report Date:</b> June 30, 2025
<b>Reason Before Council:</b> Policy Direction / Approval	<b>Priority:</b> Normal
<b>Department:</b> General Government	<b>Type of Meeting:</b> Regular Meeting

**Report Title:** Update on Strategic Plan Implementation

## **Recommended Resolution:**

Review the proposed prioritize action list provided\* by Karen Jones and provide direction to staff

\*At time of writing this report, the implementation document was still in draft form. Possible additional discussion may be needed.

## **Options:**

1. Review / re-prioritize the action items found in the list
2. Recommended that Grant applications as suggested by Ms Jones be applied for.

## **Analysis & Background:**

The new [Rural Ontario Development \(ROD\)](#) correspondence from Lisa M. Thompson, Minister of Rural Affairs was recently received. In discussion with Ms Jones, she is recommending that we apply under the program:

*“Economic Diversification, Competitiveness and Capacity Building Projects that support communities with building economic development capacity and implementing strategies to increase competitiveness and retain businesses, attract investment and enhance growth. There are three sub-streams for applicants to explore: Economic diversification and competitiveness – Up to \$150,000 (50 per cent cost share)”*

Possibly for the other 50%, we could open an application with FedNor for the balance of the funds.



Please note the province does not fund any project that is over 90%, therefore if successful we could not get more than 90% funded.

Does Council still wish to proceed if we get only one grant at 50%?

The other component that does not qualify for the ROD grant could be applied for the Heritage Fund grants. Further information will be provided at time of meeting once the final version of the priority action items is completed.

### **Correspondence received**

*"Dear Denis Turcot:*

*As the Minister of Rural Affairs, I am pleased to announce that the newly expanded [Rural Ontario Development \(ROD\)](#) program is now accepting applications.*

*This enhanced program is part of [Enabling Opportunity: Ontario's Rural Economic Development Strategy](#), our government's blueprint for protecting rural Ontario and helping rural communities and businesses to grow and thrive.*

*Ontario is investing \$20 million, doubling the funding over two years, to support rural municipalities, not-for-profits, Indigenous communities, local service boards and rural small businesses to attract investment and create new jobs and opportunities for rural workers.*

*The ROD program introduces four new enhanced funding streams and expands program eligibility to include more rural communities and rural small businesses:*

***Economic Diversification, Competitiveness and Capacity Building***  
*Projects that support communities with building economic development capacity and implementing strategies to increase competitiveness and retain businesses, attract investment and enhance growth. There are three sub-streams for applicants to explore:*

- Strategies and plans – Up to \$50,000 (50 per cent cost share)*
- Economic diversification and competitiveness – Up to \$150,000 (50 per cent cost share)*
- Capacity building events – Up to \$10,000 (35 per cent cost share)*

**Workforce Development, Attraction and Retention**

*Projects that support communities to implement strategies and/or undertake initiatives for attracting and retaining workers. Applicants can apply for up to \$150,000 (50 per cent in cost share).*

**Community Infrastructure Enhancements**

*Projects that update or transform community assets that have been identified as important to the community's economy. Applicants can apply for up to \$25,000 (35 per cent cost share) for small projects or up to \$250,000 (35 per cent cost share) for large projects.*

**Business Development**

*Projects that support small brick-and-mortar businesses in rural Ontario with between one to 20 employees. Applicants can apply for up to \$10,000 (35 per cent cost share).*

*Whether you're an applicant or a connector in your community, we hope you will help us spread the word about this program and its expanded eligibility. Applicants can find full program details, instructions and applications at [www.ontario.ca/RODprogram](http://www.ontario.ca/RODprogram).*

*Applications will be accepted until September 24, 2025, at 5 p.m. On the ROD program homepage, applicants can register for a free information session, stay up to date on future program intakes and learn more about opportunities for applicant support. To learn more about Ministry of Rural Affairs programs and to stay connected, please visit this page and follow the Ministry of Rural Affairs on LinkedIn, Facebook or X.*

*Our government is committed to protecting Ontario's rural communities, enabling them to take advantage of economic development opportunities, address workforce challenges and encourage business attraction and investment.*

*Please accept my best wishes as you explore the opportunities that are possible through the Rural Ontario Development program.*

*Sincerely,*

*Original signed by*

*Lisa M. Thompson  
Minister of Rural Affairs"*

**Attachments:**



- Implementation Plan
- Short-Term Implementation Schedule

**Prepared By:** Denis Turcot, CAO