



Planning and Development Committee Report

To: To the Chair and Members of the Planning and Development Committee
From: Brandon Kortleve, Planner
Date: July 5th, 2022
Report #: RPT-0216-22
Subject: Extension of the County Initiated Home-Based Business Pilot Project
Purpose: For Approval

Recommendation

Whereas, the Council of the County of Brant approved By-Law 82-21, being a temporary-use zoning amendment to By-Law 61-16 (as amended) to facilitate a Home-Based Business Pilot Project for the period of one year, which is set to expire on September 1st, 2022

And whereas it is desirable to extend the temporary use in accordance with Section 39(3) of *The Planning Act* for an additional period of 2 years, to expire on September 1st, 2024

Therefore, that the temporary use extension outlined further in RPT-0216-22 and the attached amending By-Law BE APPROVED

AND THAT the reasons for approval are as follows:

- The proposed temporary use extension is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020),
- The proposed temporary use extension conforms to the policies of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020),
- The proposed temporary use extension conforms with the County of Brant Official Plan (2012), and
- The proposed temporary use extension improves the overall accuracy and function of Zoning By-Law 61-16

Strategic Plan Priority

Strategic Priority 1 - Sustainable and Managed Growth

Strategic Priority 3 – Economic Resilience

Strategic Priority 6 – Stable and Responsive Governance

Impacts and Mitigation

Social Impacts

The extension of this pilot project will provide continued benefits to the residents of the County of Brant with opportunities for the start-up and incubation of small-scale local businesses in a flexible and equitable manner.

Environmental Impacts

No environmental impacts have been noted with this project and the potential for environmental impacts is mitigated through existing zoning standards.

Economic Impacts

The extension of this pilot project will continue to benefit the economy of the County of Brant, specifically related to the growth of small-scale and local businesses.

Report

Background

The County of Brant leveraged its authority under Section 39(1) of *The Planning Act* to pass a temporary use Zoning By-Law amendment in July of 2021 that provided broader permissions for home-based businesses in the County of Brant. This project has been a response to inconsistencies in the current “Home Occupation” provisions of Zoning By-law 61-16 as well as a way to provide a timely response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and its impacts on local businesses

By implementing the tactics of the County of Brant’s *Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan*, this pilot project has been part of a best-in-class review of home-based business policies and an opportunity to evaluate implementing permanent changes to our zoning requirements and Official Plan policies for home-based businesses. This project provides new and existing small-business owners the opportunity to utilize their homes for low-impact business purposes, providing the mechanisms that allow these businesses to grow and benefit the economy of the County of Brant.

Analysis

The Home-Based Business Pilot Project has been successful in several ways over the last year, including the following:

1. **Assisting at least eight (8) local businesses by granting permissions for activities that would have otherwise been prohibited.**

Throughout 2020 and 2021, Economic Development staff have identified at least 21 businesses operating in a home-based format. An extension of this pilot project will provide staff additional time to support these businesses and evaluate appropriately supportive land-use policies and permissions.

2. **Receiving no complaints related to the pilot project or businesses participating in the program.**

By-Law Enforcement staff have indicated that complaints received during the pilot project and related to businesses operating in residential areas have been related to more intensive business uses such as landscaping, construction, fabrication, and contracting. These uses are not supported by the permissions of this pilot project. The temporary zoning standards allow the County to revoke the temporary permissions for a home-based business at any time when a complaint has been received by the County.

3. **Maintaining the integrity of residential areas while providing opportunities to support the achievement of complete communities.**

As set out by the policies of A Place to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020), complete communities are intended to offer and support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to conveniently access most of the necessities for daily living, including an appropriate mix of jobs, local stores, and

services, a full range of housing, transportation options and public service facilities. Complete communities are age-friendly and may take different shapes and forms appropriate to their contexts. This pilot project has helped improve access to local services and employment at a variety of scales, supporting the growth of our local economy and its resilience in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Continuing this program for an additional period of two years allows the permissions to stay in place while staff evaluate a comprehensive and innovative approach to home-based business policies that can be permanently implemented and tracked. This will include further engagement to discuss the consideration of licensing, further financial support, land use compatibility, exploring a complete community's framework, and what it means to maintain neighbourhood character. The intention is to work to integrate permanent changes into the new Official Plan for the County of Brant and the subsequent implementation pieces by way of zoning, licenses and permits.

Summary and Recommendations

The first year of this pilot project has been a success and there have been no concerns raised by County Staff or the public with respect to the temporary zoning permissions.

It is recommended that the temporary use permissions be extended to continue the Home-Based Business Pilot Project for two additional years, to expire on September 1, 2024. This extension will provide the time needed to include any permanent zoning changes into the fulsome review of the County's land use policies being undertaken through the new Official Plan project and its eventual implementation.

Attachments

1. Approved Temporary Use By-Law (By-Law 82-21)
2. Draft By-Law for Temporary Use Extension

Reviewed By

1. Jennifer Boyer, Manager of Policy Planning
2. Mat Vaughan, Director of Development Planning

Copied To

1. Zach Gable, Senior Economic Development Officer
2. Brandon Webb, Research and Marketing Economic Development Officer
3. Greg Bergeron, Manager of Enforcement and Regulatory Services

By-law and/or Agreement

By-law Required	Yes
Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and /or Clerk	No