

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Corporate Services

Future Oxford Legacy Fund – Partnership Agreement Renewal

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That County Council authorizes the Chief Administrative Officer and Director of Corporate Services to execute a Partnership Agreement with the Oxford Small Business Support Centre Inc., as outlined in Report No. CS 2022-06 and attached as Attachment 1.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Renewal of a five-year partnership agreement with Oxford Small Business Support Centre (OSBSC) for an additional five years will continue to stimulate community participation in achieving goals and objectives set out in the *Future Oxford Community Sustainability Plan*
- Future Oxford Legacy Fund provides access to capital by means of recirculating loans and/or grants
- Partners involved in the Future Oxford Legacy Fund include
 - County of Oxford
 - Future Oxford Partnership
 - Oxford Small Business Support Centre Inc. – operating as Community Futures Oxford

Implementation Points

Upon approval of the recommendation contained in this report, and upon final execution of the renewed Partnership Agreement, the County will release to OSBSC the approved 2022 fund contribution in the amount of \$100,000 and \$45,000 for administration, management of the funds, loan portfolio costs, salaries, wages, benefits and overhead.

Financial Impact







The Partnership Agreement commits the County to fund administration costs for each year that the Agreement remains in effect, starting at \$45,000 for 2022 with an inflationary increase of \$1,000 per annum until termination of the agreement or five years, whichever comes first.

In addition, the Agreement allows the County to provide future contributions to the Fund at its sole discretion. County Council approved a provision in the 2022 budget for a \$100,000 contribution to the Fund and \$45,000 for administration costs.

Communications

The OSBSC collaborates with its partners involved in the Future Oxford Legacy Fund, including the County and Future Oxford Partnership, in promoting the Fund to support local community businesses and organizations to invest in sustainability initiatives as set out in the Future Oxford Community Sustainability Plan.

Strategic Plan (2020-2022)

					
<i>WORKS WELL TOGETHER</i>	<i>WELL CONNECTED</i>	<i>SHAPES THE FUTURE</i>	<i>INFORMS & ENGAGES</i>	<i>PERFORMS & DELIVERS</i>	<i>POSITIVE IMPACT</i>
1.ii.		3.iii.			

DISCUSSION

Background

In September 2015, Council adopted the Future Oxford Community Sustainability Plan and soon thereafter adopted a funding strategy to support delivery of the Community Sustainability Plan. A key component of the funding strategy was the development of a Future Oxford investment fund. The intent of a Future Oxford investment fund is to create a streamlined, locally managed, loan and/or grant allocation model that would allow the Future Oxford Partnership resources necessary to implement the plan, while maintaining transparent and accountable use of available funds.

The original five-year Future Oxford Legacy Fund Partnership Agreement was executed in October 2016 with a termination date of December 31, 2021. The grant in the first year was \$340,000 - \$300,000 for the loan and grants program and \$40,000 to support related administrative costs. The following four years of the Agreement, County Council approved grants in the amount of \$100,000 for the loan and grants program and increased the administration grant in each year by \$1,000 to reflect cost of living increases.

Comments

Attachment 2 to this report is the 2021 Future Oxford Legacy Fund Impact Report prepared by OSBSC in accordance with the reporting requirements of the Partnership Agreement. In addition to highlighting the investments made within the county for advancing the goals and objectives of the Future Oxford Community Sustainability Plan in 2021, the report cites impacts of the Fund since its inception in 2016. The report indicates that \$698,613 in loans have been issued to date that leveraged \$7.5 million in community investment, creating and/or sustaining 168 jobs. As for grants, there were 22 initiatives supported by investments of \$29,130, leveraging 74 partners' investments totalling \$175,000.

As part of the County's 2022 Business Plan and Budget process, the General Manager of the OSBSC presented a report to County Council illustrating the outcomes of the Partnership Agreement to date which demonstrates its success and need for the Fund to continue to incent the goals and objectives of the Future Oxford Community Sustainability Plan. In the presentation, Council was asked to give consideration to continue with the \$100,000 investment to the Future Oxford Legacy Fund each year for the next five years and that the contribution for administrative costs be continued on the same basis as set out in the original agreement.

On December 8, 2021, County Council adopted the 2022 Business Plan and Budget which includes a grant for the Future Oxford Legacy Fund in the amount of \$100,000 for the Fund and \$45,000 for administration, management of the funds, loan portfolio costs, salaries, wages, benefits and overhead.

In response to Council's approval to continue to support the Future Oxford Legacy Fund, Attachment 1 to this report is a copy of the original Future Oxford Legacy Fund Agreement with proposed updates for a renewed agreement to continue the Fund for up to five more years. The Agreement has been amended as follows:

- to reflect dates for the next five years, terminating by December 31, 2026;
- incremental increases to the administrative payments by \$1,000 per year to account for inflation;
- increase in the amortization period for loans from ten to twenty years (with no change to the maximum term of loans which remains at five years) to ensure repayment obligations are manageable, where required; and
- a statement was added to acknowledge the County as a party to this partnership arrangement in a form and manner as directed by the County – recognizing what has been practiced throughout the term of the original Agreement for communications.

Conclusions

Oxford County Council, with significant input from the community, has taken significant strides to shape the future of Oxford. Continuation of the Future Oxford Legacy Fund demonstrates leadership in support of a community based vision and a willingness to strategically invest in our future and expected accomplishments. As emphasized in previous reports, both government and broad community leadership is required to make this initiative a success. On that basis,

staff recommends execution of a renewed Partnership Agreement for the Future Oxford Legacy Fund as outlined in this report.

SIGNATURES

Departmental Approval:

Original signed by

Lynn S. Buchner, CPA, CGA
Director of Corporate Services

Approved for submission:

Original signed by

Michael Duben, B.A., LL.B.
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Future Oxford Legacy Fund Partnership Agreement – 2022 -2026
Attachment 2 – Future Oxford Legacy Fund Impact Report 2021