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Date January 20, 2022 **Report No.** 2022-54

To Chair and Members
Brantford Downtown Improvement Task Force

From Marlene Miranda, General Manager
Community Services and Social Development

1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item []
Item For Consideration [X]

2.0 Topic **Brantford Downtown Improvement -Working Groups Monthly Report**

3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Staff Report Brantford Downtown Improvement - Working Groups Monthly Report BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT the resolution entitled "Closing the Revolving Door of Justice", attached hereto as Appendix "D", BE APPROVED; and
- C. THAT the resolution entitled "Addressing the Revolving Door of Justice – Accountability for Sureties and Swift Justice", attached hereto as Appendix "E", BE APPROVED.

4.0 Executive Summary

This report is intended to provide the Brantford Downtown Improvement Task force with an update on the status of the 3 Working Groups arising from the

work of the Brantford Downtown Improvement Task Force as of October 2021. The working groups are:

The Community Supports Working Group: (CSWG) The focus of CSWG is to enhance the availability of cohesive support and non-emergency response to those in need of assistance.

The Economic Development, Tourism and Community Programs Working Group (EDWG): The focus of EDWG is to provide recommendations to the Downtown Improvement Task Force to enhance Economic Development, Tourism and Community Events in downtown Brantford.

The Safety and Security Working Group (SSWG): The focus of the SSWG is to advise the Brantford Downtown Improvement Task Force on short and long term steps to address the undesirable behaviours and activities that are occurring in the downtown.

The CSWG held a meeting on December 15, 2021. At the December meeting, draft priority actions were presented to the Working Group along with the findings from the best practices subgroup. The information collected from the jurisdictional scan was used to fine-tune the recommended priority actions for review by the Task Force and inclusion in the final report to Brantford City Council. A final draft of priority actions was sent to the CSWG members in early January for comment. Due to the recent wave of Omicron infections, key CSWG members from the health sector have extremely limited or no availability during December and January. The next meeting of the CSWG is scheduled for January 26, 2022 (see Appendix A: Community Support Working Group January Update).

The EDWG met January 14, 2022 and finalized a list of short, medium and long-term recommendations for Task Force consideration (see Appendix B: Economic Development Working Group January Update).

The SSWG met on January 07, 2022 to finalize two advocacy resolutions. One to the Federal government to strengthen the bail reform and the other to the Provincial government for additional judicial resources to be dedicated to the City of Brantford (see Appendix D: Resolution-Closing the Revolving Door of Justice and Appendix E: Resolution- Addressing the Revolving Door of Justice - Accountability for Sureties and Swift Justice).

Additionally, the SSWG met January 10, 2022 and participated in a facilitated session to prioritize the top action items to develop a draft safety and security

action plan (see Appendix C: Safety and Security Working Group January Update).

The three working groups have reviewed the feedback from the engagement session, people with lived experience, stakeholder engagement sessions, a jurisdictional scan and participated in prioritization sessions to create draft action plans to inform the overall Brantford Downtown Improvement Final Action Plan to be presented to the Task Force in February 2022 (see Appendix F: Draft Community Support Action Plan, Appendix G: Draft Economic Action Plan and Appendix H: Draft Safety and Security Action Plan). The input of the working groups will be aligned with existing municipal initiatives.

5.0 Background

On May 22, 2021 City Council adopted the following resolution and approved the creation of the Downtown Improvement Task Force:

WHEREAS Downtown Brantford is facing serious economic and societal issues, stigma, and challenges due in part to escalating poverty, homelessness, substance use, vandalism, social misbehaviours, crime, and the fallout of the Covid-19 Global Pandemic and;

WHEREAS public outcry for a program to address these issues is at an all-time high and;

WHEREAS without deliberate and intentional support and focus Downtown Brantford could face irreparable decline, and;

WHEREAS improving the health, vitality and resiliency of the Downtown is critical for achieving our vision of the Downtown to be a place that:

- i. Signals our city's economic vibrancy and attraction
- ii. Tells a story of who we are as a City
- iii. Be a centre for culture, arts, music and entertainment for our City
- iv. Be a centre for academia
- v. Is safe, secure, inclusive and welcoming for a broad diversity of people
- vi. Offers strong local and tourist attractions
- vii. Provides opportunity for businesses to succeed

- viii. Offers compassionate care for those who need it; and,
- x. Is a safe and attractive neighborhood that people chose as their home.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

A. The Corporation of the City of Brantford ESTABLISHES the Downtown Brantford Improvement Task Force; B. The composition of the Task Force is comprised of the following:

- i. the Mayor of the City of Brantford
- ii. the following members of Brantford City Council:
 - 1. Councillor Wall
 - 2. Councillor Van Tilborg
 - 3. Councillor McCreary
 - 4. Councillor Utley
 - 5. Councillor Vanderstelt
- iii. The Brantford-Brant Member of Provincial Parliament, or their designate
- iv. The Brantford-Brant Member of Parliament, or their designate
- v. A representative from the following organizations and institutions, to be selected at the discretion of their membership as well as an identified alternate:
 - 1. The Downtown Brantford BIA
 - 2. The Brantford-Brant Chamber of Commerce
 - 3. The Downtown Central Neighbourhood Association
 - 4. The Brantford Public Library
 - 5. Wilfrid Laurier University
 - 6. Conestoga College
 - 7. Brantford Police Services
 - 8. The Brant County Health Unit

vi. The Task Force can at any time submit a recommendation for Council's consideration that other stakeholders be invited to join the Task Force.

C. The purpose of the Task Force shall be to facilitate the development of a safer and desirable Downtown by collectively working together to prepare an action plan and/or strategies for that purpose including:

i. Short and long term steps to address the undesirable behaviours and activities that are occurring in the downtown;

ii. More effectively supporting vulnerable populations collectively including but not limited to the homeless, those with substance use disorders, mental health and addictions, and;

iii. Enhancing tourism, arts, culture, music, entertainment and community events to attract people to the downtown to visit and live.

D. To achieve the completion of their mandate as outlined in Clause C, the Task Force will:

i. Provide a forum for conducting a series of public meetings to receive and hear deputations and briefs regarding ideas and strategies to achieve the primary purpose of the task force as set out in Clause C.

ii. Invite written submissions from municipal departments, groups and individuals and other community stakeholders interested in developing a safer and desirable downtown.

iii. Thereafter assess all ideas and strategies and prepare a recommended program for Council's consideration of concerted action to achieve the objectives above setting out priorities, targets, timing, staging, and implementation teams.

E. The administrative support for the Task Force shall be provided by the Community Services and Social Development Commission; and

F. The Task Force shall report back directly to City Council with a final report in Q1, 2022. However, the Task Force may, at any time prior to Q1 2022, bring forward any recommendations for short-term solutions to be considered for immediate implementation.

6.0 Corporate Policy Context

City of Brantford approved Council Priorities, 2021-2022:

1. All neighbourhoods in the City are safe, vibrant, attractive, and inclusive.
2. Social services support is provided to Brantford residents in need.

7.0 Input From Other Sources

None

8.0 Analysis

Please refer to attachments:

- CSWG Monthly Update
- EDWG Monthly Update
- SSWG Monthly Update

9.0 Financial Implications

There are no Financial Implications associated with this report.

10.0 Conclusion

The Working Groups represents an opportunity for collaboration between City government, community organizations, downtown Brantford businesses, and individuals to provide valuable insight to the Downtown Brantford Improvement Task Force. The monthly working group updates are included as appendices to this report.



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Attachments (if applicable)

Appendix A: Community Supports Working Group January Update
Appendix B: Economic Development Working Group January Update
Appendix C: Safety & Security Working Group January Update
Appendix D: Resolution to Federal Government Re Closing the Revolving Door of Justice
Appendix E: Resolution to Province Re Accountability for Sureties and Swift Justice
Appendix F: Draft Community Supports Draft Action Plan
Appendix G: Draft Economic Development Draft Action Plan
Appendix H: Draft Safety and Security Draft Action Plan

Copy to:

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required ☐ yes ☒ no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk ☐ yes ☒ no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? ☐ yes ☒ no