



TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: GRANT APPLICATION FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND ROUND 3 SUPPORTED BY GEORGIAN COLLEGE

WARD: ALL

PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT: N. GAVARRE, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, EXT.4431

SUBMITTED BY: S. SCHLICHTER, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: B. ARANIYASUNDARAN, GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That staff in the Economic and Creative Development Department be authorized to apply to the Skills Development Fund (SDF) Round 3, through the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) on an application for up to three years of funding, to address skills development and labour shortages within the manufacturing sector with Georgian College as the service delivery partner, under the following parameters:
 - a) That in accordance with the requirements of the SDF, the City of Barrie be the lead applicant;
 - b) That all costs incurred by the City of Barrie to administer the program, including employee resources, be identified, and supported as part of the funding application; and
 - c) That the Director of Economic and Creative Development Department be given delegated authority to make decisions pertaining to the operation and execution of the program when it is deemed reasonable or required, at the discretion of the Director, in consultation with applicable departments and the General Manager of Infrastructure and Growth Management.
2. That should the City of Barrie be successful in obtaining the funding that the appropriate Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be created between the City of Barrie and Georgian College outlining program deliverables and financial approvals in a form acceptable to the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer, Director of Economic and Creative Development and the Director of Legal Services.
3. That the City Clerk be authorized to execute all requisite documents and to facilitate the application, and any associated funding approvals in a form acceptable to the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer, Director of Economic and Creative Development and the Director of Legal Services.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

Report Overview

4. The purpose of this Staff Report is to seek authorization to apply for and execute requisite agreements should Provincial funding approvals be received for an application to the Skills Development Fund. Staff in Economic and Creative Development will work with Georgian College as the service delivery partner in addition to other community partners to develop an application focusing on the development of a resilient workforce by supporting retention and capacity-building for employers by offering skills training to their existing workforce in addition to skill development opportunities for those currently un or underemployed in the labour market.

Skills Development Fund (SDF) Round 3 Application

5. The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) has allocated \$90M in 2022-23 through the Skills Development Fund (SDF) to support projects that will support Ontario's economic recovery. Funding will be available for up to three years.
6. This is the third round of funding for the SDF to be released by the MLTSD.
7. The SDF supports project-based solutions that offer partnership-driven approaches to stimulate economic growth in emerging and key growth sectors of Ontario's economy and to increase long-term economic competitive advantage through workforce development strategies that can support workforce sustainability and resilience.
8. The main objectives of the SDF fund are to:
 - Support and help develop a resilient workforce by supporting access into the labour market, and/or retention and capacity-building for employers.
 - Empower workers and job seekers who face higher barriers of entry in the workforce and enhance pathways into meaningful and gainful employment.
 - Encourage partnerships across the economy and support innovative ideas and training solutions.
9. Ministry approved primary applicants that can submit applications have been identified as: Employers (other than private and public colleges, universities, and Indigenous Institutes), apprenticeship delivery agents, non-profit organizations, Indigenous band offices, professional associations, trade unions, district social services administration boards, hospitals, and municipalities. All colleges, universities and Indigenous Institutes must work with an approved ministry primary applicant to apply for the SDF.
10. Applications for SDF Round 3 will be accepted for ministry review on a continuous basis until January 31, 2023.

Skills Development Fund Round 2

11. In December of 2021, the City of Barrie's Economic and Creative Development Department supported by partners at Georgian College, the County of Simcoe and the Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board and Literacy Network applied for the SDF Round 2.
12. In March of 2022, the Economic and Creative Development Department was notified that its bid had been successful and on March 31, 2022, City of Barrie signed the Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province of Ontario as the successful recipient of the SDF Round 2 funding.
13. The City of Barrie secured \$1,083,108.00 in funding to deliver a one-year program called "Manufacturing & the Future Workforce-RapidSkills". Accordingly, the SDF Round 2 Program is a one-year agreement with the Province of Ontario to be completed by March 31, 2023.
14. The primary objective of the program is to implement solutions to address workforce challenges in the advanced-manufacturing sector. The 2022 project supported economic recovery efforts for manufacturers through the development and delivery of flexible, entry- and mid-level technical skills training solutions. The project also included pre-employment supports, recruitment and retention initiatives, and the promotion of the manufacturing sector as a viable and rewarding career path. Course offerings have included Fundamental Shop Skills, Robotics, CNC Machining, Precision Machining, Leadership in Manufacturing, Quality Management, Industrial Automation, and Hydraulics & Pneumatics.
15. As part of the program, a Manufacturing Advisory Committee was formed to ensure that training matches industry needs. Currently the Advisory Committee has eleven local manufacturers that participate by providing regular feedback and direction for the program.
16. The 2022 SDF program is still underway and has had many successful outcomes, including more than 150 business engagements with manufacturers to promote the program and opportunities available to the sector, resulting in more than 140 unique course registrants from manufacturers across Simcoe County to date. Many of these 140 registrants have taken more than one training course.
17. The program also focuses on empowering workers and job seekers who face higher barriers of entry. To date, the program has assisted several unemployed people access training and make connections with manufacturers for employment, including 23 women, 32 youth, and 19 newcomers.

Proposed Skills Development Fund Round 3 Application 2023

18. Based on the success to date with the Round 2 program and continued interest from local and regional manufacturers, the primary objective of applying for the SDF Round 3 will be to develop and implement solutions to address the workforce challenges of the advanced manufacturing sector over a three-year funding term, continuing the work that was started with the Round 2 funding, and explore opportunities to incorporate technological applications that could support employers.

Role of the City of Barrie

19. As the primary applicant, the City of Barrie would be responsible for acting as the main contact to the Ministry.

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20. Other responsibilities the City of Barrie would have include developing the project plan, administration of the program, promoting the program, helping in the recruitment of employers to participate in the programming, managing all financial resources, reporting obligations to the Ministry, and ensuring the delivery of the project meets Ministry requirements.
 21. Should the City be successful in its application, it would enter into a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province (MLTSD) and will be accountable to meet reporting requirements throughout the life cycle of the agreement, including activity and progress reports, final report, and fiscal accounting for the project.
 22. MLTSD may engage or require the project to engage a third-party auditor to evaluate funded projects during or after their implementation.
 23. The City of Barrie, if successful, would be responsible for managing third party service provider relationships, ensuring their delivery of program deliverables, and payment for services, which will predominantly be Georgian College as the primary service delivery partner.

Role of Georgian College

24. Georgian College's Continuing Education and Corporate Training Department (CECT) and Career and Employment Community Services (CECS) will serve as the primary delivery agent for program training and services that will be identified in the application to support labour market skills development to meet the needs of local manufacturers.
25. Georgian College has extensive experience managing projects within government-funded and community-based initiatives. The college has over 50 years of education and training experience. Georgian's CECT Department regularly engages faculty to develop curriculum and design and deliver training. Georgian's CECS has a long history within the community creating and piloting employment initiatives through government-funded programs that support employers and job seekers.
26. Georgian College's CECT Department will develop training courses that have been identified by manufacturers as key areas of technical shortage and being valuable in supporting workforce sustainability and long-term economic competitiveness.
27. Georgian College's CECS will work with unemployed job seekers by providing training and coaching in pre-employment skills.
28. Both Georgian Departments will fulfil their reporting requirements and any other obligations outlined through the creation of a MOU with the City of Barrie, should an application be approved through the SDF.
29. Further, opportunities to engage students through co-operative learning and research project opportunities related to technology implementation will also be explored.

ANALYSIS

30. Ontario has been facing tight labour market conditions, with the unemployment rate at multi-year lows and employers reporting recruitment challenges, particularly related to finding workers with specific desired skills and experiences.
31. Through Economic and Creative Development consultations with local manufacturers, skills shortages have been identified amongst the most pressing challenges facing Barrie's manufacturers today.

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32. Advanced Manufacturing is a key employment sector for the City of Barrie and County of Simcoe, in addition to being a target sector for the MLTSD. All of which align with Georgian College's expertise and capacity for training.
 33. The new SDF Round 3 offers an opportunity for the City of Barrie to continue working with community partners and further advance and expand on the existing program started with the 2nd round of SDF funding.
 34. The program being proposed through a Round 3 SDF Application aligns with the goals of the Economic and Creative Development Department, including:
 - Collaborating within the community to deliver supports, programs and services that ignite economic growth, and promote resilience in business;
 - Cultivate a dynamic workforce and pipeline of talent;
 - Implement strategies to strengthen development of key sectors including advanced manufacturing.
 35. The City of Barrie and Georgian College have a longstanding partnership, jointly working on several initiatives that benefit the community. Georgian College has the experience and expertise in continuing education and corporate training along with career and employment services
 36. If successful with the application, the City of Barrie will create a MOU with Georgian College to solidify responsibilities and payment plans. Costs to be included within the application will include staffing costs, equipment, marketing, materials, office supplies and travel costs directly associated with the execution and delivery of the project.
 37. Program applications of this type are often approximately between \$1 million and \$1.5 million per year and include the human resource costs to deliver the program in addition to the programs themselves. Should staff receive approval to complete an application, the specific program elements would be refined as part of the program application process.
 38. Economic and Creative Development staff have begun consultation with local manufacturers to gather feedback on the types of skills training they would be interested in for the future and pending a successful project application, a Stakeholder Advisory Group will be formed consisting of local industry employers to ensure programming aligns with their needs and to achieve the objectives of the funding application.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT MATTERS

39. There are no environmental and/or climate change impact matters related to the recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES

40. The following alternatives are available for consideration by General Committee:

Alternative #1

General Committee could not support the City of Barrie as the lead applicant for the Skills Development Fund.

This alternative is not recommended as it is an opportunity for the City of Barrie to apply for provincial funding that will directly and positively impact our local manufacturing sector at cost recovery to the City of Barrie.

FINANCIAL

41. There would be no net new impacts to the budget resulting from the proposed recommendation. All costs associated with Skills Development Fund will be included in the application which is estimated between \$1M-\$1.5M per year for three (3) years.

LINKAGE TO 2022-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

42. Supporting an application to the Skills Development Fund addresses Council's Strategic Priorities of:
- Affordable Place to Live**
 - Open for business environment to help encourage job creation
 - Develop and attract talent to support our employers
 - Responsible Governance**
 - Support the services our community needs while keeping tax increases low
43. An application to the Skills Development Fund through the Economic and Creative Development Department directly addresses skills shortage facing employers in the manufacturing sector and contributes to developing talent to support employers. Should the application be approved, the City of Barrie will be delivering support services to local employers and job seekers that are cost recoverable and would not have an operational impact on the tax-base.