



The Regional
Municipality of
Durham

Corporate Services
Department –
Legislative Services

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September 27, 2019

The Honourable Ernie Hardeman
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
77 Grenville Street, 11th Floor
Toronto, ON M5S 1B3

Dear Minister Hardeman:

**RE: Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Funding
Renewal Request (2019-EDT-14), Our File: D02**

Council of the Region of Durham, at its meeting held on September 25, 2019, adopted the following recommendations of the Planning & Economic Development Committee:

- “A) That contributions of \$30,000 to the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance be included in the Business Plans and Budget submissions for the years 2020 to 2021, for consideration by Council through the annual Business Plans and Budgets process, and subject to approval of funding from the other six municipal partners; and
- B) That a copy of Report #2019-EDT-14 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development be circulated to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; the Regional Municipalities of Halton, Peel, York, Niagara; Cities of Hamilton and Toronto; and the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance.”

Please find enclosed a copy of Report #2019-EDT-14 for your information.

Ralph Walton

Ralph Walton,
Regional Clerk/Director of Legislative Services

RW/tf

c: Please see attached list

- c: G. Milne, Regional Clerk, Regional Municipality of Halton
- K. Lockyer, Regional Clerk, Regional Municipality of Peel
- C. Raynor, Regional Clerk, Regional Municipality of York
- A-M. Norio, Clerk, Regional Municipality of Niagara
- J. Pilon, Acting Clerk, City of Hamilton
- U. Watkiss, Clerk, City of Toronto
- J. Horner, Executive Director, Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance
- B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee
From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2019-EDT-14
Date: September 3, 2019

Subject:

Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Funding Renewal Request

Recommendation:

That the Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends to Regional Council:

- A. That contributions of \$30,000 to the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance be included in the Business Plans and Budget submissions for the years 2020 to 2021, for consideration by Council through the annual Business Plans and Budgets process, and subject to approval of funding from the other six municipal partners; and
 - B. That a copy of this report be circulated to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs, the Regional Municipalities of Halton, Peel, York, Niagara, Cities of Hamilton and Toronto, and the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance.
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Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purposes of this report are to provide an update on the activities and initiatives of Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance (GHFFA), and to request support for annual funding from Durham Region of \$30,000 annually for a three year term, subject to approval by Council through the annual Business Plans and Budgets process. A funding request letter from the GHFFA is attached (Attachment #1).

- 1.2 The Executive Director and Chair of the GHFFA will be attending this Committee meeting as a delegation.

2. Background

- 2.1 The GHFFA was formed in 2012, and is comprised of the Regional Municipalities of Durham, Halton, Peel, York and Niagara, the Cities of Toronto and Hamilton, Federations of Agriculture, the Province of Ontario, the Federal Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, non-profits and other agricultural industry stakeholders. Regional Councillor Debbie Bath-Hadden is Durham's Council-appointed representative on the GHFFA committee.
- 2.2 This multiple partner approach enables the Region to share resources and respond to agricultural issues with a common voice.
- 2.3 In 2013, the GHFFA developed the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Action Plan to support food and farming across the Golden Horseshoe. The Action Plan provides a blueprint for a more integrated and coordinated approach to food and farming viability, ensuring that the Golden Horseshoe retains, enhances, and expands its role as a leading food and farming cluster in North America.
- 2.4 It also focuses on removing barriers and enhancing the opportunities to promote a competitive and sustainable food and farming sector in the Golden Horseshoe. The Action Plan has the following objectives:
 - a. To respond to the common challenges and opportunities that arise from the large concentration of population; growth pressures; lack of compatibility between agricultural and urban land uses; a myriad of regulations; and a growing cluster of food and farming enterprises located in the Golden Horseshoe.
 - b. To enhance competitiveness, promote sustainability, and remove barriers that stand in the way of achieving these goals to support food and farming businesses in the Golden Horseshoe.

3. 2018-2019 Implementation and Support of the Action Plan

- 3.1 The achievements of the GHFFA include projects, outreach and engagement initiatives and communications.

Projects include:

- a. Transitioning the GHFFA from a project under the auspices of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to an independent, not-for-profit organization.
- b. Food and Farming Asset Mapping: Leading an ongoing project to maintain a database and map agri-food supply chain assets across the Golden Horseshoe, which included the development of a business plan for sustainability with Queen's Business School and formation of the project module 'ConnectOn'.
- c. Local Food Procurement in Long-Term Care Homes: Following a successful pilot in Durham Region to increase local food procurement in Long Term Care homes, Durham continues to work with GHFFA and the University of Guelph in a three year study to determine the economic impact of offering local food in facilities to improve the nutritional health and well-being of residents.
- d. Engaging in a study with Holland Marsh Growers to map the value chain for Ontario Carrots used domestically, imported and exported.
- e. Commissioning a study by the Canadian Urban Institute with the City of Toronto to demonstrate the value of the Ontario Food Terminal.
- f. Continuing support to Durham Region to recognize Farm Families who have been farming for at least 150 years.

Significant engagement initiatives include:

- Municipal Agriculture Economic Development and Planning Forum;
- A workshop in Niagara Region focusing on Small Plot Farming;
- Food and Farming Asset Mapping Training Workshops; and
- Collaboration with Mohawk College to promote healthy local food choices by food service providers at colleges and universities.

Engagement policy review and communication initiatives:

- Continued consultation with the Province and municipal partners on Provincial Agricultural System mapping, implementation procedures and methodology;
- Consultation on Schedule 10 of Bill 66 – Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act 2018; and

- The publishing monthly of online e-newsletters and stories showcasing agriculture in the Golden Horseshoe, including activities and businesses within Durham Region.
- 3.2 The Action Plan was unanimously endorsed by all member municipalities, including Durham Region. Municipal contributions to the implementation of the Action Plan have been through in-kind contributions of staff time and resources, as well as annual funding in the amount of \$30,000 from each of the member municipalities since its inception in 2012.
- 3.3 The Action Plan is currently being refreshed to plan for opportunities and challenges over the next five years.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Region of Durham has been making annual funding contributions to the GHFFA in the amount of \$30,000 per year, which have been included annually in the Economic Development and Tourism Division Business Plan and Budget. Funding for this year was included in the approved 2019 Business Plan and Budget, and support is being requested for the continued annual contribution of \$30,000 in funding for the years 2020 to 2021, subject to Regional Council's approval of the annual Business Plans and Budget and funding from the other six municipal partners.
- 4.2 The seven funding member municipalities have also been requested to contribute \$30,000 per year for the next three years and these funds will be used to leverage additional funding from various Provincial government programs as well as Federal programs that may become available.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Region's continued participation and support of the GHFFA is essential to ensuring a coordinated and effective approach to growing the food and farming sector in the Golden Horseshoe.
- 5.2 Continued annual funding of the GHFFA in the amount of \$30,000 annually for three years has been requested by the GHFFA. Funding for 2019 is included in the approved 2019 Business Plans and Budgets, and subsequently will be included in future Business Plans and Budgets submissions for the consideration of Council. It is expected the other member municipalities of Halton, Peel, York, Niagara, Toronto and Hamilton will also be making equal annual contributions. These funds will be

used to leverage additional Provincial and Federal funding programs to refresh and implement the Action Plan.

6. Attachments

Attachment #1: Letter from Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP
Commissioner of Planning and
Economic Development

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer



Please Note New Address!

Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance
P.O. Box 55
Milton, Ontario
L9T 2Y3

June 1, 2019

Dear Nancy,

I am sending you this letter on behalf of the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance (the Alliance). In 2011, each of the Regional Councils within the Golden Horseshoe, and the Cities of Hamilton and Toronto, unanimously endorsed 'The Golden Horseshoe Agriculture & Agri-Food Strategy – Food & Farming: An Action Plan 2021' (the Action Plan) and the following vision for the future for the food and farming sectors:

The Golden Horseshoe is globally renowned as a vibrant food and farming cluster, characterized by profitable farming operations, a thriving hub of food processing, food retail and food service businesses, extensive research capacity, innovative technology, and a wide range of healthy and safe products.

The Action Plan is made up of a series of 62 actions that require a co-ordinated approach from the Alliance partners, including the Province, Municipal Councils, Farmers and the Food Industry, to ensure its successful implementation. To ensure the Action Plan's realization, in 2011 each Regional Council in the Golden Horseshoe and in the Cities of Hamilton and Toronto, appointed a representative to the Alliance and each municipality contributed \$30,000 a year to implement the Action Plan.

The Alliance has been successful in securing additional matching project support from the Province, the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation, and other partners. These funds have enabled the Alliance to meet, and staff to implement the Action Plan.

A recent review showed that approximately 90% of the Action Plan has been accomplished by either the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance or by the many organizations that have partnered with us to advance the plan. The many positive shared outcomes show that the Alliance collaborative approach to advocate and grow the Agri-Food economic cluster is a significant benefit for the industry, and provides each of our partner municipalities opportunity to leverage our Economic Development investments.

Accomplishments in 2018

1. Consultation and significant contributions into the modernization of Provincial agricultural policy to the Provincial Growth Plan and the development of the Provincial Agricultural System for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and draft Provincial Agricultural Impact Assessment Guidelines.
2. Developed and implemented a food and farming asset data base that identifies the Golden Horseshoe agri-food supply chain assets. This data is valuable to municipal planners and economic developers and is a branded database platform called "ConnectOn". In 2019 the database will be marketed to municipalities outside of the Greater Golden Horseshoe in an effort to compile agricultural production and food processing information in a consistent manner across the province.
3. In partnership with EDCO (Economic Developers Council of Ontario), Rural Economic Development Funding was secured. Seven municipal partners including Durham, Halton, Hamilton and Niagara added their manufacturing data to the ConnectOn database and now have current Agri-Food and Manufacturing data at their fingertips. This project was successfully completed on time and on budget on December 31, 2018.
4. Following the success of our "Serving Up Local" project which increased Local Food Procurement in 9 Long Term Care Homes in Durham, Halton and Hamilton by 23%, funding was received to begin a 3-year project to study the economic impact of increased local food procurement in LTC. Fifteen homes in Peel and Niagara Region will be added to the original cohort for the study.
5. Delivered and partnered with the Friends of the Greenbelt Council and Niagara Region to offer best practices in "Small Plot Farming" – a workshop geared for planners and economic developers.
6. Incorporation of the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance to move to a stand-alone body from a project under the auspices of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. The Inaugural Annual Meeting of the Alliance was held on May 21, 2019 in Niagara. ***Please note our new address at the top of this letter.***

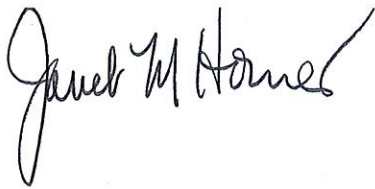
Financial Request

In order to continue the work required to implement the Action Plan, each of the partner Regions and Cities are being asked to contribute \$30,000 per year to 2021, to complete this work and prepare a new

Action Plan. The contribution helps to pay core funding and leverage additional dollars for the projects and activities of the Action Plan. At this time, in-kind contributions are being made by the partner municipalities through the use of staff time allocated to the management of the various initiatives. Your 2019 Invoice is included with this letter.

On behalf of the Alliance, I would like to thank the Region of Durham for your ongoing support to advance food and farming in the Golden Horseshoe Region.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Janet M. Horner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Janet" and last name "Horner" clearly legible, and "M." as a middle initial.

Janet Horner
Executive Director
Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance

Cc. Debbie Bath-Hadden