Economic Development Task Force Minutes

10:00 AM - Tuesday, May 19, 2026
Council Chambers

Present:	Deputy Mayor Roy Huetl (Acting Chair); Cyndy Bonello; Paul Thiel; Dan Vaillancourt and Betty Hunter
Absent with Regret:	Councillor John Inglis (Chair)
Also Present:	Brooke Ross, Dipl.M.A., Manager of Community Development (MCD); Alyssa Borger, Economic and Community Development Student and Lori Newman (Secretary)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 10:00 a.m.
The EDTF welcomed back Alyssa Borger, Economic and Community Development Student.

2. Traditional Land Acknowledgement

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

None.

4. Economic Development Task Force Notes

a) Notes of the April 20, 2026 EDTF Meeting as approved via email and were received for information at the May 21, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council.

5. Business Arising

a) Youth Entrepreneurship Initiatives, Incentive & Retention Programs

Councillor Mike Hage presented an overview of the Administrative Report for Youth Entrepreneurship Initiatives, Incentive & Retention Programs that was presented to Council on March 20, 2026.

"Keeping Young Talent in North Frontenac
A low-cost, high-impact strategy to retain youth, seed entrepreneurship, and grow our local economy from within.
Prepared by Councillor Mike Hage — May 2026
The problem: North Frontenac is losing young people to urban centres — shrinking our tax base,depleting our labour pool, and weakening community vitality.The cost of inaction

compounds every year.
FOUR PILLARS OF THE PROGRAM
1. Startup Micro-GrantsUp to $500 for entrepreneurs aged 18-25 with a viable business plan, only for residents with financial projections.
$5K CIP reallocation
10 grants/yr
2. Co-Working Space
Affordable desks, internet, and meeting rooms at Clar-Mill Hall &/or Barrie Hall.
Professional workspace without urban overhead.
$50-100/mo 5-10 workstations
3. Mentorship Network
5-10 volunteer mentors from the local business community, matched to young entrepreneurs by industry &/or interest.
Zero cost - annual recognition event
4. Tax Abatement
Up to 50% property tax reduction for years 1-5 for new youth-led businesses that create atleast 2 full time positions.
Self-funding - tied to job creation

PILOT YEAR & VISION
3 startup grants awarded
1 co-working space launched in one of the halls
5 mentor matches established
Results reported to Council at 12 months
Scale or adjust based on outcomes

Young people don't leave communities that invest in them. They leave communities that give them no reason to stay."

The EDTF discussed ideas to adjust/expand the idea and also advised that a Municipality cannot offer reductions under the Municipal Act. The EDTF will continue to discuss at the next EDTF meeting and will invite Frontenac Business Services to attend and present to the EDTF, as there may already be programs out there that relate to youth entrepreneurship.

b) Work Plan

1. **Increased number of business startups and expansions**
    a. Welcome Package – Bonello -

    Cyndy Bonello reported that there is a sufficient stock of updated Welcome packages. The MCD advised that Alyssa Borger, Economic and Community Development Student has sent requests to additional Township businesses to see if they have any marketing materials they would like to be included in the packages.

b. Business Dinner & Forum (April 17, 2026) – Vaillancourt, Huetl, Hunter -

The Business Dinner and Forum working group advised that they will plan to do a dinner again in 2027. They also advised that they received a Thank You letter from the Tinker Sisters.

c. Business Profiles –Thiel -

Paul Thiel reported that he is working on a Business Profile for Nine North Golf – the new owners of Hunters Creek Golf Course in Cloyne. The MCD reminded the EDTF that Alyssa will be available to complete some Business Profiles in the upcoming months as well. Alyssa and Paul will discuss this further to create a list of potential businesses to Profile.

d. National Tradesman Day Breakfast (Sept) – MCD -

The MCD advised the EDTF that planning for this event will not begin until August 2026.

e. Improvement of Township Community Improvement Plan – Inglis, Huetl, MCD -

The MCD advised the EDTF that Council approved the proposed amendments to the Township's Community Improvement Plan that was presented to Council at the May 1, 2026 Council Meeting and that the appeal period will end May 21st, 2026.

f. Bi-annual Business Owners Workshop Meetings (June 10, 2026 7pm-9pm) – Bonello, Vaillancourt -

Cyndy Bonello and Dan Vaillancourt advised that the first Bi-annual Business Owners Workshop Meeting details have been finalized and is scheduled for Wednesday, June 10, 2026 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Barrie Community Hall in Cloyne. Dan requested that the MCD book the hall for set up beginning at 4:00 p.m. on June 10th.

The MCD reported that invitations have been sent out to the businesses however no RSVP's have been received as of yet. The working group requested that the MCD place an advertisement in the Frontenac News as soon as possible.

2. **Increased Tourism**

a. Attend Two (2) Tradeshows – Bonello, Thiel, Hunter -

The working group will submit a debrief of the April 25 & 26, 2026 Outdoor and Adventure Travel Show in Ottawa at the next EDTF meeting. Cyndy reported that it was a very successful event and they had many visitors to their booth.

b. SummerFest (July 18, 2026 11-4) – Bonello, Inglis, Vaillancourt -

The sub-committee reported that preparations are moving along great for the 2026 SummerFest. There are currently 27 vendors, a band and the Beavertails truck committed so far. The MCD advised that the covered rink construction should be substantially completed before the Summerfest event and likely will be able to be used.

c. WinterFest (February) – Bonello, Inglis, Hunter -

The WinterFest sub-committee advised the EDTF that planning for this event will not begin until 2027.

d. ATV Trails (including K&P Trail) Opportunities and Promotion – Huetl, Bonello -

Roy Heutl reported that there are no updates regarding this initiative. He did relay that the Ompah Spring Ride was very successful and that The Ottawa Valley ATV Club plans to host a Ompah Fall Ride as well. More information will be provided closer to the date.

e. Advertising Initiatives to improve visitors coming to North Frontenac -

The MCD advised the EDTF that the 2026 Economic Community Development Student, Alyssa Borger, will be working on completing the 2026 Visitor Guide, Stargazing brochures, Maps of campsites and hiking trails and will create new QR codes after the new Township website launches.

6. New Business

None.

7. Adjournment

a) Meeting adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

NOTE : The next meeting of the EDTF will take place on Monday, June 15, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at the Municipal Council Chambers located at 6648 Road 506, Plevna.

Recommendations to Council

Be It Resolved That Council receives for information the May 19, 2026 Notes of the Economic Development Task Force (EDTF).

Received by Council on June 11, 2026.

Councillor John Inglis, Chair