

Council okays economic review

By Mark Pavilons

King councillors approved a request from staff to hire a consultant to review the Economic Development Strategy.

Economic Development officer Jamie Smyth requested that council opt for the sole source contract, allowing MDB Insight Inc. to continue with their work.

MDB provided their consultation services during the creation of the first Economic Development Strategy, which was a five-year plan running through October of 2018.

Smyth said the Township has made "significant progress" in accomplishing the goals set out within the strategy's major collaborative initiatives and 38 action items.

A scheduled update to the five-year strategy is necessary to "review and refine the goals and actionable items.

"It is intended that the review/update of the strategy will also take into account the current and forecasted local and global economic conditions that will be used to prepare and guide the Township's economic and community development aspirations for the next five years (2019-2023).

"Conducting this EDS review and update also presents the opportunity to review and incorporate more recent economic and community development programs and plans such as the Community Improvement Program (CIP) and the Community Tourism Plan under the framework of an updated strategy."

The review, Smyth noted, is scheduled to start this month and continue over the next eight months, concluding with recommendations for council in April 2018. MDB's review is estimated to cost \$23,500.