

Partnership Approach to Strategic Planning

CF Ontario Conference

June 3, 2024

Who we are



**Community Futures
Development Corporation**

Renfrew County

- Community Economic Development
- Business Financing
- Business Counselling & Support



Renfrew County of
Ontario . Canada

Experience Our History, Share Our Future!

- Economic Development
- Entrepreneurship and Small Business
- Destination Marketing & Development



Why a strategic plan?

- ▶ If you know why, great. You are where you should be.
- ▶ If you don't, this session isn't for you.



What RCCFDC has done in the past

- ▶ Hosted community consultations
- ▶ Internally developed key priority areas
- ▶ Minimal budget used
- ▶ Developed by staff, verified by Strategic Planning Committee
- ▶ No further community feedback or verification
- ▶ No one on one consultations with key stakeholders

As a result of not enough community engagement, and in an effort to save on budget, we didn't end up with a robust plan.

What the County has done in the past

- ▶ Consultant and internal development routes
 - ▶ Hosted an Economic Development Summit
 - ▶ County Council/Committee developed strategic goals
 - ▶ Weak in community consultation
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- ▶ Long timeframe and narrow lens: 5+ years is too long
 - ▶ Lacking implementation plan = no KPIs or tracking = no reporting

Our process

- ▶ Why doing this together?
 - ▶ Save money
 - ▶ Avoid stakeholder fatigue
 - ▶ Widening the net (consultation)
 - ▶ Align priorities
 - ▶ Leverage resources & expertise
 - ▶ Broaden organizational reputation

Our process

- ▶ Who had to buy-in?
 - ▶ Municipal government vs Not-for-profit world
 - ▶ CFDC board & staff
 - ▶ County EcDev staff
 - ▶ County Council/Committee

Who we worked with

- ▶ RFP Process for consultant selection
- ▶ Required approvals completed in tandem
- ▶ McSweeney & Associates



Desired Goals & Outcomes

- ▶ Two distinct plans that are strategically aligned
- ▶ Identified synergies that are complementary and supportive
- ▶ Uncover duplication in services, gaps in sectoral support
- ▶ Build regional collaboration
- ▶ Conduct comprehensive consultation
- ▶ Lead by example...

The Results

- ▶ Goals & outcomes achieved:
 - ✓ Two distinct plans
 - ✓ Identified synergies that are complementary and supportive
 - ✓ Laid the groundwork for building stronger regional collaboration

Stumbling Blocks

- ▶ Clear understanding of each organization's 'lane'
 - ▶ Board members
 - ▶ Consultants
- ▶ Consultation
 - ▶ Size of region
 - ▶ Stakeholder engagement

So where do we align?

Two dominant messages that came out through consultations were around the need to **attract talent** to support the business community, and to **build collaboration** to support economic development across the County.

Share several concerns/areas of focus:

- Housing & child care
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Economic & Community Development training

From the Consultant's Perspective

- ▶ Process was efficient
- ▶ Allowed for addressing sensitive subjects

Words of Wisdom

- ▶ Identify local and regional partners in your community
- ▶ Listen to your stakeholders
- ▶ Think outside the box

Questions?
Discussion?