

## **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT P2013-02**

To: Committee of the Whole Council

Date: January 21, 2013

Subject: East Gwillimbury's University (EGU) Project  
Post Secondary Attraction Work Plan and Draft Project Management Model

Origin: Development Services, Economic Development & Sustainability Branch

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### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. THAT Development Services Department, Economic Development & Sustainability Branch Report P2013-02, dated January 21, 2013 regarding the EGU project, be received;
2. THAT the Phase 2 – Foundation Work Plan attached as Appendix 1, be endorsed;
3. THAT priority be given to advance the Foundation Work Plan as soon as possible and that staff be authorized to retain the required consulting services in accordance with the Town's Procurement Policies and Procedures;
4. THAT the Draft Project Management Model and Overall Project Work Plan attached as Appendices 2 and 3, be received and considered by Council as option for moving the EGU Project forward and that staff report further with respect to the necessary resources or funding strategy and recommended project management model;
5. THAT Council pass the Resolution attached to this report as Appendix 4 as a statement to reaffirm and assert Council's commitment to the EGU project.

### **PURPOSE**

A great deal of information regarding the EGU Project has been provided recently through reports, presentations, and workshop discussion. The purpose of this report is to build on this information, provide Council with an overall project management model for its consideration, and make recommendations regarding the immediate advancement of the Phase 2 Post Secondary Attraction activities.

### **BACKGROUND**

The EGU Project continues to be a Strategic Initiative with benefits both economically and from a community building perspective.

A post secondary institution was part of the original 1989 conceptual plans for the Community of Queensville and since that time, continues to be an important part of the overall development for

this area and the Town as a whole. In 2006, Council adopted an Employment Corridors & Economic Impacts Report prepared by Watson Associates in association with WCM Consulting Ltd. The Watson Report provided a detailed analysis of the impact of the university development including revenues of approximately \$2.4 million in annual taxes as well as the creation of approximately 2000 direct jobs and a significant amount of indirect jobs.

The Town's new Official Plan (June 2010) includes a series of policies associated with Economic Development activities and the Town's projected employment population of 35000 jobs by 2031. The Official Plan identifies five key areas of economic growth and development including the establishment of a post-secondary institution.

A key priority in the Town's Economic Development Strategy, approved in 2012, is the attraction and development of a post-secondary institution in East Gwillimbury. A post-secondary institution would be a significant employment generator creating both direct and indirect jobs. In addition, it would be expected that a post-secondary institution would also attract related investment such as business park and/or office, research and industrial investments.

#### Activities to Date Have Created Significant Positive Momentum

While activities to advance the EGU Project have not been consistent since its inception, 2012 activities have helped to refocus the Town's efforts and have re-established significant interest in this project both locally and regionally. The Town's aspirations have become well known throughout the Region and in many areas of academia, government, and business as a result of the Town's outreach activities to date.

December 2012 and January 2013 Council workshops were held to assist in focusing efforts to advance the EGU initiative. The following resolution was carried unanimously by Council at the January 14, 2013 workshop:

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT the presentation of the East Gwillimbury Post-Secondary Attraction Project, be received; and*

*THAT staff bring forward a report for CWC consideration on January 21, 2013 that emphasizes approval in principle for the approach to moving forward presented at the January 14, 2013 workshop and provides further strategies for moving forward on securing a University in East Gwillimbury.*

For ease of reference staff are considering the activities to date as Phase 1 of the EGU project. As Council is aware, a considerable amount of work has been undertaken during 2012 to advance this project. This has included several outreach meetings with key leaders and

stakeholders, a visioning charette with community leaders and potential partners as well as Council workshops and presentations.

As noted previously, the next steps in the project, referred to as Phase 2, are outlined in Appendix 1 attached.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Designing a Work Plan Focused on Success

A very simplified work plan for the overall project, attached as Appendix 1, was prepared and presented at the January 14<sup>th</sup> workshop. It is recognized that delivery of a post-secondary institution in East Gwillimbury will be a complex process and will necessitate very concerted efforts. One component of this overall work plan involves the building and communication of the EGU story. As per the January 14<sup>th</sup> workshop presentation and discussions, this component is crucial and should be advanced immediately. The details within this component are provided in Appendix 1 (Phase 2 – Foundation Work Plan).

### Resources Required and Draft Project Management Model

A draft project management model has been prepared for Council's consideration and is attached as Appendix 3. This has been prepared for discussion purposes and will require refinements as we move forward with this project.

The EGU initiative is a very unique project and has the potential to result in significant, positive benefits for the community. It is recognized that our approach to undertaking this project will need to be tailored and that the various stages of the project will require resources with special skill sets. Dedicated and focused project management will be crucial to the success of this project.

Staff see two potential options for project management for the post secondary initiative, generally described as follows:

- 1) Re-deployment of an existing staff position (Manager of Economic Development and Sustainability) to the EGU project along with adjustments to supporting staff responsibilities and a reprioritizing of the 2013 objectives of the Town's Economic Development & Sustainability Branch of the Development Services Department; or
- 2) The employment of an external Project Lead through contracted services dedicated to the EGU project.

The project management model also involves the establishment of a Project Steering Committee to help with pushing the work plan forward and providing critical advice to Council at key milestones throughout the process. A series of potential working committees with external resources as required have also been included in the project management model. Staff anticipate that, depending on the composition of the Project Steering Committee, some for the various areas of expertise may be available, however accessing other expertise (i.e. fundraising, partnerships, government relations, public consultation) may necessitate the establishment of these other working committees.

### Volunteer Input and Contributions Have Been Invaluable

The Business Development Committee has been engaged in the EGU initiative since the approval of the Town's Economic Development Strategy in 2012 and throughout the Town's outreach activities. In November 2012, the BDC formed a sub-committee to further explore ideas around a digital presence and communication strategy for the initiative. The sub-committee presented project objectives to Council as part of the budget process for 2013.

The work completed to date by the BDC sub-committee has been invaluable to the process and helpful to moving the project forward. A significant amount of volunteer time has been expended by the sub-committee to prepare the digital presence document for external communications, assist in preparing the project scope and staging with Town staff, preparation of presentation materials for and participation in Council workshops in December 2012 and January 2013.

The Town has also benefitted from the experience, interest and support of key members of the community. In particular, we recognize the efforts of Stephen Quinlan and his assistance thus far in the process. There would be distinct advantages for the Municipality to maintain and extend this working relationship.

As part of any financial model moving forward, we should be considering the most appropriate way to recognize efforts, formalize working relationships with existing and future partners and consider the possibility of suitable compensation arrangements.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council has assigned funds (\$375,000) for the EGU Attraction Program as a key initiative for 2013 as part of the Budget process. We do note that expenditure of these funds is subject to specific approvals throughout this process. The Phase 1 (2012) activities cost approximately \$20,000. These costs were kept very low due to the efforts of community volunteers and internal staff as well as through access CFDC funding. Capital project funding in the amount of slightly over \$20,000 remains in the EGU capital project through the Council approved transfer of funds from the CAO's Contingency Reserve in August 2012. There are also funds remaining from the

CFDC grant funds associated with a 2-phased charette process which had been part of what staff had anticipated for this project at that time. Arrangements for use of these funds have been extended to the end of March 2013. Staff will review options with the CFDC to determine if these funds could be redeployed for use in other aspects of this project.

It is estimated that moving forward with Phase 2 of the work plan and continuing with necessary outreach and partnership discussions will cost approximately \$25,000 to \$50,000. This would be directed to: costs for building the story (per Appendix 1); advancing outreach activities and digital presence; meeting expenses; and provide for possible per diem amounts for community volunteers.

Staff will need to access up to approximately \$50,000 from the funds noted above in order to keep the project moving forward. Additional funding and resources necessary for the balance of the work plan will be the subject of a subsequent more detailed report.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN**

The EGU Initiative supports the pillar “Manage Growth for a community that is environmentally responsible, profitable and provides healthy places to live, work and play and learn” as it provides guidelines that ensure business development and job creation form an integral part of the Town’s projected growth. The post-secondary institution remains an important element of the Town’s economic growth and has been included as a primary objective in both the new Official Plan and the Town’s Economic Development Strategy. The Region’s recent economic development action plan also includes a post-secondary strategy which will be a 2013 project involving area municipalities.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The January 14<sup>th</sup> Council Workshop presentation briefly touched on the detailed work plan for the Phase 2 component of this project; the Foundation. At that time, Council requested that a copy of the detailed Phase 2 work plan be provided. As noted previously, this is attached as Appendix 2. Staff are recommending that immediate steps be taken to advance the Phase 2 work plan for this project and that external consulting services be retained to undertake this critical first step. Further analysis and discussion will be required to determine the best option for the overall project management model.

As part of the Council Workshop discussions, staff were also asked to prepare a resolution which would reaffirm the Town’s commitment to the post-secondary initiative. A draft resolution has been prepared and is attached to this report as Appendix 4. The purpose of this resolution is to succinctly articulate the basis for the project and the Town’s commitment to the post-secondary objective.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix 1 – Phase 2 – Foundation Work Plan  
Appendix 1 – Overall Project Work Plan  
Appendix 3 – Draft Project Management Model  
Appendix 4 – Draft Council Resolution – Commitment to University Project

This report has been reviewed by the Senior Management team.

Prepared and Recommended by:

Reviewed & Approved by:

*Original report signed by*

*Original report signed by*

Dan Stone, MCIP, RPP, Manager  
Economic Development & Sustainability

Carolyn Kellington, MCIP, RPP,  
General Manager, Development Services

Approved for Submission:

*Original report signed by*

Thomas R. Webster  
Chief Administrative Officer

## APPENDIX 1 – PHASE 2 - FOUNDATION WORK PLAN

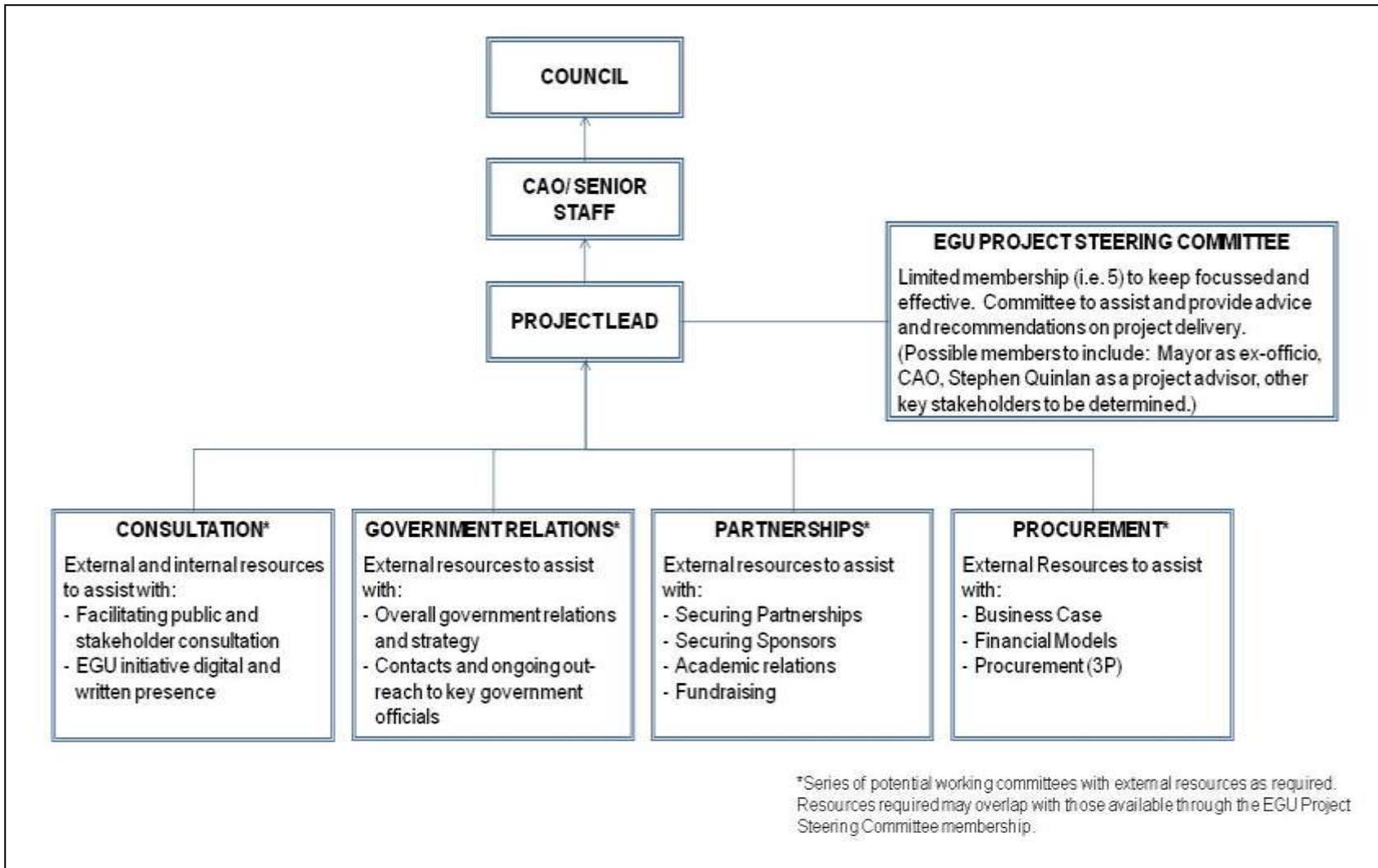
STAGE Activity	DESCRIPTION	NOTE REF#	2013				
			January	February	March	April	May
	Present results at each stage to Council Council may call a halt at any time	i	LEGEND: 				
1	<b>Project Approval</b>  <b>1 Build the EG Story for Town and Community</b> 1 Research & Gather Initial Input <i>Demographics (now and projected)</i> <i>Population and growth</i> <i>Educational attainment</i> <i>Economic activity</i> <i>Infrastructure</i> <i>Transit</i> <i>Strategic competitive advantages</i> <i>Proximity to academic institutions</i> <i>Economic Benefits</i> <i>Watson Report</i> <i>Social &amp; Cultural benefits</i> <i>Physical Environment</i> <i>Outcomes of Other Communities</i> <i>Town Staff Brainstorming</i> <i>Advisory Committee/CoC Leaders</i> <i>Council Input</i> 2 Investigate thrusts and plans of competitors 3 Create Benefit Alignment Matrix and triage aspects to develop further 4 Draft EG Story Draft EG Story (present to CAO & Staff) 5 Final Draft EG Story Draft EG Story (present to Council) 6 Draft EG Story PowerPoint						

## APPENDIX 2 – OVERALL PROJECT WORK PLAN



## APPENDIX 3

# POTENTIAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT MODEL



## **APPENDIX 4 – DRAFT RESOLUTION**

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### **COMMITMENT TO POST-SECONDARY INITIATIVE**

WHEREAS the Town of East Gwillimbury has, since the early 1990's, envisioned and planned for a post-secondary institution in the municipality as a cornerstone to the building of a complete community;

AND WHEREAS, this vision has been embedded in approved growth management and planning documents and the Town has consistently demonstrated its intention to attract a York Region post-secondary institution to the Town;

AND WHEREAS the Regional Municipality of York remains the largest population area within the Greater Toronto Area without a university;

AND WHEREAS the Town of East Gwillimbury is in the distinctly unique position to leverage opportunities to secure key land and partnerships and take advantage of significant infrastructure spending currently being undertaken by the Province and the Region for servicing, transportation and public transit initiatives;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Places to Grow) positions the Regional Municipality of York, and specifically, the Town of East Gwillimbury for significant population and employment growth which will further increase the demand for post-secondary education options;

AND WHEREAS attracting a post-secondary institution is a key recommendation of the Town's Economic Development Strategy (approved January 2012) and Goal #1 in the York Region Economic Development Action Plan (approved December 2012);

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the Town of East Gwillimbury enacts as follows:

- i) THAT the Council of the Town of East Gwillimbury reaffirms the Town's Economic Development Strategy, supports the findings of York Region's Economic Development Plan, and declares that it intends to pursue post-secondary educational facilities for York Region, to be primarily located in the Town of East Gwillimbury;
- ii) THAT to address the present and future demand for local university options in a timely fashion, the Council of the Town of East Gwillimbury hereby declares the post-secondary attraction project the top strategic priority, deserving of immediate, sustained and deliberate effort;
- iii) THAT Council hereby directs staff to prepare, and immediately begin implementation of a work plan, with funding allocated in the 2013 Business Plan and Budget, to prioritize and undertake this project;
- iv) THAT Council hereby directs that staff continue to build on the partnerships and collaborations that have already been undertaken;
- v) THAT Council directs staff to report back to Committee of the Whole on a regular basis on the implementation and status of this project;

- vi) THAT the Municipal Clerk forward this resolution to the Region of York and that the Region be asked to pass a supporting resolution requesting that the Province prioritize and approve a York Region University; and
- vii) THAT the Municipal Clerk forward this resolution to the Mayor and CAO of all area municipalities within the Region of York, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, all attendees of the September 2012 EGU Visioning Charette, other appropriate government agencies, potential private sector partners, and academic institutions to publicly reaffirm the Town of East Gwillimbury's commitment to securing post-secondary educational facilities.