

Mayor Brocanier and Members of Council

**Town of Cobourg Municipal Offices**

Victoria Hall

55 King Street West

Cobourg, ON

K9A 2M2

June 9, 2016

Mr. Mayor and Council,

On the June 13th COW agenda there is a proposal to approve the hire of a Business Attraction Consultant. This proposal to spend \$61,500 for four months (\$184,000 annualized) has numerous issues in how taxpayers' money is spent.

1. This is an unbudgeted expense. The Downtown Marketing Partnership appears in the preliminary Budget but was removed from the final Budget.
2. As previously discussed with Mayor Brocanier, why is the Town competing with private business? Commercial real estate agents already work in the field buying, selling and leasing industrial, commercial, and investment property. They work on commission; therefore, at no expense to the citizens. How can council justify hiring a consultant? As an aside, why does the Town not list their own inventory of properties and leave private enterprise to maintain their own list? There are several concerns about the existing Town inventory list:
  - It represents a duplication of services with the private sector
  - It is not kept up to date
  - It has inaccurate information; e.g. Park Theatre is currently listed with a real estate broker at \$795,000 and yet the current Town list (dated June 3, 2016) shows the price as being \$500,000.
3. Why is there a need to hire more consultants when the Town as well as the County already have Economic Development departments?
4. What are the measures of success for this expenditure? The success measures referenced - "produce 30 leads and sell sheets" - are merely activities; they are not results. Spending \$61,500 to produce 30 leads and sell sheets is a poor use of taxpayers' money.
5. The use of consultants to produce business development plans surely has reached a limit. We already have CIVI, CIP, Downtown Vitalization in addition to Northumberland County Economic Development Department, and the Cobourg Economic Development Department.
6. This role will be steered by the DMP, not town staff. Why do we have an Economic Development department, if they are not in a position to provide a leadership role in providing direction here?

We urge Council to reject this expenditure.

Thank you for your consideration to this matter.

Bill Stuckey  
Advisory Committee  
Cobourg Taxpayers Association