
To: Mayor and Council

From: Briar Kelly, Community Economic Development Officer

Meeting Date: May 12, 2025

Subject: Report #CAO-005-2025 - EDCO Regional Professional Development RFP Submission

Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council of the Township of Clearview hereby receive report CAO-005-2025 (EDCO Regional Professional Development RFP Submission) dated May 12, 2025; and,

- 1) That Council approve submitting a proposal to the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) for the Township of Clearview to host a regional professional development event in 2026; and,
- 2) That Council supports including an amount of \$15,000 in the 2026 Economic Development budget to cover event expenses if Clearview Township's proposal is approved by EDCO.

Background

The Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) is Canada's largest provincial economic development organization. For over 68 years, EDCO has increased the capacity of those who practice economic, industrial, and community development through professional development initiatives, information exchanges among members and the promotion of the economic development profession. It has also been a catalyst for assisting in the development and promotion of Ontario and its municipalities. EDCO's membership is comprised of specialists from various disciplines. Each person contributes their expertise to the complex job of economic development. The Council consists of:

- Municipal, Business and Economic Development Professionals
- Municipal, Regional, Provincial, Federal Government Officials
- Land Developers
- Educators and technology assistance developers and facilitators
- Industrial and Commercial Realtors
- Tourism Industry Representatives
- Industrial/Commercial/Tourism Development Specialists from Banks, Public Utilities and Transportation Companies

EDCO plans to hold four (4) in person regional events (North, Southwest, Central and Eastern Ontario) in 2026. The meetings will be one day in length and attended by 50-70 economic development professionals from both the public and private sector. The program allows members to learn and share information on current issues and programs that affect the profession in their region. Economic Development offices and municipalities are encouraged to apply through a Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFP has been included in this Report as Appendix A. The RFP opens to applications on May 1st, 2025, and will close on May 31st, 2025. Host communities will work collaboratively with EDCO to develop the roster of speakers, program content and receive time on the agenda.

Comments and Analysis

The EDCO Regional Events allow economic development professionals to gather small groups in their local regions for a one-day professional development event. The event agenda includes a mix of presentations, panels, and networking opportunities. EDCO staff will work with the selected host communities to develop the program, speaker solicitation and session planning. If selected, Clearview Township will have the main responsibility in brainstorming session topics relevant to the region, speaker solicitation and to bring together the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem to seek support in forms of sponsorship and on-site coordination. EDCO will maintain responsibility for the food and beverage requirements and support the associated expenses. The host community receives two complimentary registrations for the regional event.

If selected, host communities can expect staff to dedicate 30 hours of event planning and coordination time to this event. Further consideration must be given to the forecasted expenses that the Township must absorb, including but not limited to venue fees, event materials and other expenses. As part of the RFP requirements, the application must demonstrate the community has the funds available to support these expenses. In principle, staff may demonstrate the availability of funds as part of the RFP and if approved by EDCO as a host community, may then submit request for additional funds as part of the 2026 Budget Planning.

Additional consideration may be given to host communities that can provide attractive accommodation for attendees to encourage the individuals to spend more time within the host community. With that in mind, staff will be selective with the proposed venue to ensure that it is within a reasonable travel distance of overnight accommodations. Special considerations will be given to a venue with pre-existing relationships with accommodation operators to promote add-on-stay packages.

The positive impacts of being selected as a host community are demonstrated in the opportunities to highlight Clearview Township as and showcase businesses and core sectors. Clearview Township shares many similar challenges as other rural communities, which opens the potential for bringing together industry leading experts for

key sectors, attracting regional economic development professionals to the area and strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem of Simcoe County. By leveraging the relationships that the Community Economic Development Officer has built within the regional ecosystem, there are opportunities to procure sponsorship and additional financial support through partnerships.

At the time of this report, event coordination is in the initial stages. The submission will include community elements that will be highlighted during the event, a tour of a Clearview business in a key economic sector (aggregate, agriculture, tourism or aerospace), potential speakers from local businesses and important details of the proposed venue and its capacity for hosting an event of this calibre.

Financial Implications

For this initial report there are no direct financial implications. However, if Clearview Township is selected as a host community, there will be costs associated with staff time, venue rental, event materials and transportation to conduct a business tour. There may be a future budget ask as part of the 2026 Budget Planning that will be determined upon proposal selection. There is also the opportunity to procure sponsorship from regional partners and stakeholders to execute this event.

Forecasted Budget

Item	Amount
Venue Fees	\$8,000
Travel (Tour)	\$1,000
Event Materials (swag, signage, printing)	\$6,000
Total Budget Consideration	\$15,000

Clearview’s Strategic Plan

The above initiative supports the following strategic pillars:

- Recreation & Culture
- Core-Business (Agriculture)

Report Appendices

Appendix A – RFP EDCO Host Community 2026

Approvals

Submitted by: Briar Kelly, Community Economic Development Officer

Reviewed by: John Ferguson, CAO

**Financial Implications
Reviewed by:** Kelly McDonald, Treasurer/Director of Finance

Approved by: John Ferguson, CAO