



## **The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle**

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**Prepared by:** Patti Funaro, Director of Culture and Recreation

**Department:** Culture and Recreation

**Date of Report:** March 29, 2021

**Report Number:** CR-2021-11

**Subject:** Strategic and Operational plans for the Benoit House

### **Recommendation**

That the report of the Director of Culture and Recreation dated March 29, 2021 (CR-2021-11) regarding the operation of the Benoit House be received; and that the recommendation to operate the Benoit House as a Community Museum be approved; and further, that the recommendation to authorize administration to engage the services of ADS Consulting Group at a cost of \$46,000.00 to develop Strategic and Operational Plans for the Benoit House be approved.

### **Report**

As the development of the Small Coast Waterfront project continues, further direction and plans must be confirmed for the operation and management of the Benoit House in two areas:

1. Operate the house as a Community Museum or Heritage House/Community Centre
2. Develop strategic and operational plans for the next three to five years

### **Operation**

Operating the home as a Community Centre limits the Town to providing community and public programming spaces. On the other hand, operating the house as a Community Museum offers numerous benefits. All community museums in Ontario must meet the criteria established in Regulation 877, Grants for Museums under the Ontario Heritage Act and the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries Standards for Community Museums in Ontario (Appendix A). These ten standards for community museums represent the minimum requirements for the operation of a good community museum. Community museums need to meet the

standards to be considered for funding under the Community Museum Operating Grant (CMOG). CMOG may fund a percentage of the museum's annual operating budget (subject to provincial budget allocations), based on the overall operating budget. Identification as a Community Museum offers additional opportunities through other funding sources as well. In addition to funding, operating as a Community Museum will hold the Town accountable to comply with museum laws and regulations and ensure good care of assets held in public trust. This will ensure that the public both now and, in the future, can enjoy and learn from the museum. A Community Museum is held to a standard with exhibits that confirms accuracy of information, relevance to the community, effective communication, opportunities for learning and engagement, and the safe display of artifacts. Furthermore, a Community Museum will provide the opportunity to partner with other collecting institutions for shared or loaned exhibits and will have an interpretation and education program that consists of a mix of school programs, public programs, and special events. Lastly, Community Museums provide valuable learning opportunities in the form of cooperative education, summer employment and volunteer opportunities.

## **Planning**

It is necessary to develop a strategic plan for the preparatory work, operations and implementation steps required to create the first-ever Museum in the Town of LaSalle. The development of this Plan will reflect and respect the overall objectives of the Small Coast Waterfront Experience. Administration recommends that the Town engage the services of Alysson Story of ADS Consulting Group to develop these plans through two phases (Appendix B). Ms. Storey has more than 20 years of diverse experience in project management, communications and consulting primarily in the arts, cultural and heritage sectors. She has a deep knowledge of cultural planning along with the management and promotion of heritage sites. Highlights of note include her leadership role as Manager of Culture & Special Events at the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, where she was responsible for all aspects of Department operations for all municipal cultural facilities, which included two heritage homes in two different communities, a Museum, two theatres and two art galleries, studios and event spaces. Ms. Storey has substantial experience in the management of historic homes, their unique needs, potential risks and individual characteristics. She also played a primary role in the development of the Municipality's first-ever Municipal Cultural Plan as well as coordinated and facilitated the subsequent CK Cultural Implementation Plan. This comprehensive process included extensive public consultation and in-depth work with stakeholders and reporting. Ms. Storey has an extensive and successful track record of advocacy and developing partnerships with the Provincial and Federal government and secured substantial grant funding during her time with the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. If approved, work would begin immediately with completion expected by the end of 2021. Upon completion, the Town has the option of extending services with ADS Consulting Group for implementation of the Plans. The preparation of the Plans will be financed through the capital funding previously approved by Council for the Small Coast Waterfront project. Funding was included in the overall cost of the initial phases to retain various consultants to complete the necessary studies/reports to implement the redevelopment of this waterfront park.

## **Consultations**

Kevin Miller, Director of Special Projects

## **Financial Implications**

\$46,000.00 financed through the capital funding previously approved by Council for the Small Coast Waterfront project

## **Prepared By:**



Director of Culture & Recreation

Patti Funaro

## **Link to Strategic Goals**

1. Enhancing organizational excellence - Not Applicable
2. Strengthen the community's engagement with the Town - Yes
3. Grow and diversify the local economy - Not Applicable
4. Build on our high-quality of life - Yes
5. Sustaining strong public services and infrastructure - Yes

## **Communications**

N/A

## **Notifications**

N/A

**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	CR-2021-11-Benoit House .docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Appendix A - Standards for community museums in Ontario.pdf</li><li>- Appendix B - Benoit House Strategic Plan Proposal Mar2021.pdf</li></ul>
Final Approval Date:	Apr 6, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Chief Administrative Officer

Joe Milicia