

8.2. Downtown Revitalization Incentives
Program Policy FIN-320

Written Submission

Wood Buffalo Economic Development
Corporation



Mayor and Council
RMWB
9909 Franklin Ave.
Fort McMurray AB

June 17, 2020

Subject: The Downtown Revitalization Incentive Program

Dear Mayor and Councillors

On behalf of the Business Recovery Task Force (the Task Force), we are pleased to offer our full support of this pilot project and its expansion to include more businesses in the downtown core. It is a timely initiative that will benefit the business community at a time when they need it the most. Each of the incentives are well designed to both encourage businesses to remain in the downtown core and to improve their respective spaces, thereby benefitting the broader community. The Task Force also commends the Administration for its hard work on this project.

As you will recall, the Task Force is a coalition of key stakeholders who have been selected by the Wood Buffalo Economic Development Corporation (WBEDC) and endorsed by the RMWB Council to make recommendations for programming and specific business supports that can be executed during the COVID-19 public health emergency, the local state of flood emergency, and following the lifting of all public health and local emergency orders. The Task Force is represented by the Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce, Northeastern Alberta Aboriginal Business Association, Fort McMurray Construction Association, Fort McMurray Hotels Association, Oilsands Community Alliance, Fort McMurray Airport Authority, Arctic Winter Games, WBEDC, financial institutions and local businesses. Supported by WBEDC, members of the Task Force are as follows:

Alethea Austin, Achieve Wellness
Kristi Hines, Hines Health services
Paul Jones, Fort McMurray Hotels Association
Mike Lambert, East Village Pub
Keith Plowman, Fort McMurray Construction Association



Kim Rizzi, Wood Buffalo Arctic Winter Games
Nick Sanders, Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce
Chris Seggewiss, Royal Bank of Canada
RJ Steenstra, Fort McMurray Airport Authority
Michelle Toner, Northeastern Alberta Aboriginal Business Association
Kevin Weidlich, WBEDC (Task Force Chair)
Karim Zariffa, Oilsands Community Alliance

Councillors Verna Murphy and Jane Stroud also participate on the Task Force.

Our region is enduring an unprecedented time with the triple-hit of an economic downturn, the COVID-19 public health emergency, and the flood of the Lower Townsite. This pilot initiative comes at an important time for our community. We encourage council to support this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Weidlich", is positioned above the printed name.

Kevin Weidlich
President & CEO
Wood Buffalo Economic Development Corporation
& Chair, Business Recovery Task Force