

COMMON COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date	February 19, 2019
Meeting Date	February 25, 2019

SUBJECT: 2019 Expectation Letters for Economic Development Agencies

OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION

This matter is to be discussed in open session.

AUTHORIZATION

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
<i>Growth Committee</i>		

RECOMMENDATION

Growth Committee recommends that Common Council approve the 2019 expectation letters with DevelopSJ and Economic Development Greater Saint John.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Common Council's approval of the proposed 2019 expectation letters with the City's two economic agencies – DevelopSJ and Economic Development Greater Saint John (EDGSJ). These letters set the City's expectations to promote a positive working relationship with its agencies and a more robust process with larger reporting expectations, to improve accountability for the City's investment into economic development. City expectations for DiscoverSJ form part of a contract with the City, which expires at the end of 2019.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

On Tuesday February 12th, 2019, the Growth Committee adopted the recommendation to Council for 2019 Develop SJ and EDGSJ expectation letters.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Common Council has adopted a new set of Council Priorities: 2016-2020 in early November 2016, and under the heading of "Growth and Prosperity," the following is stated: "Saint John is recognized by residents and businesses as a positive and supportive city. We grow in a smart way and attract talent, innovation and opportunities so all people can thrive." In addition, Council adopted key performance indicators to evaluate its ability to *Grow SJ*, including,

among others: “Building permit value,” “Change in tax base assessment within the City,” “Change in population.” Finally, Saint John Common Council adopted the Roadmap for Smart Growth on Monday March 27th, 2017.

REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek Common Council’s approval of the 2019 expectation letters with the City’s two economic agencies, DevelopSJ and Economic Development Greater Saint John (formerly Enterprise Saint John). City expectations for DiscoverSJ form part of a contract with the City, which expires at the end of 2019.

New Approach to Expectation Letters

Last December, the Growth Committee endorsed a new approach to the expectation letters, one that ensures a more robust process with larger reporting expectations and improved accountability for the City’s investment in economic development.

The approach being recommended achieves the following:

- *Greater clarity on the City’s expectations* for the investment provided, while respecting the agency’s expertise in their respective areas of focus in driving economic development on behalf of the City. The letters are intended to set a positive tone for an improved working relationship with the City.
- *More robust requirements for agency reporting.* The agencies will be accountable for setting targets, reporting results and communicating how their activities contributed in a measurable way to achieving the results. A new timeline is included which defines expectations and key milestones for reporting of targets and results.
- *Signal changes to the economic delivery structure are likely for 2020,* linked to the City’s fiscal sustainability efforts. The City Manager will be communicating further details on this initiative expected to roll out in 2019 to ensure greater alignment to optimize the governance model for growth.

The 2019 process will involve:

- In February, Common Council approves and issues the 2019 letters.
- Q2 agencies present to Common Council annual work plan and targets.
- Q3 agencies present mid-year progress report to Growth Committee.
- Q1 (2020) Agencies present year-end report to Common Council.
- Review of economic service delivery governance model.

SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

The intended outcomes of the City of Saint John's growth-related efforts and investments are to achieve new levels of employment, population and tax base growth.

INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

2019 Expectation Letters with DevelopSJ & Economic Development Greater Saint John