

Present:

Mayor McCallum – Chair
Councillor Nagra
Councillor Patton
M. Heeney, President & CEO, SCDC

Regrets:**Staff Present:**

D. Jones, General Manager, Investment & Intergovernmental Relations
V. Lalonde, City Manager
S. Wu, Manager, Economic Development
L. Anderson, Legislative Services

Guests:

A. Huberman, Surrey Board of Trade

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was

Moved by Councillor Nagra
Seconded by Councillor Patton
That the minutes of the Investment & Innovation Impact Committee meeting of November 26, 2020, be adopted.
Carried

B. DELEGATIO**1. SFU Agritech Program and Medical School**

Joanne Curry, Vice President, External Relations, Paul Kench, Dean of Science, Dugan O'Neil, Vice President, Research and International *pro tem*, and David Hik, Associate Dean – Academic, Faculty of Science, were in attendance to provide a presentation on SFU's Agritech Program and Medical School.

A PowerPoint presentation, giving a summary and current status of plans for a new undergraduate program in Agritech Innovation at SFU Surrey, was provided.

Comments were as follows:

- A horizon plan undertaken to establish suitable projects for the Faculty of Science in Surrey, identified AgriTech as an area of interest, resulting in a focus of evolving an undergraduate program in AgriTech Innovation.
- The program is seen as a standalone program for Surrey, anticipating approximately 400 undergraduates at a point in time. A strong collaboration with the Faculty of Applied Science, which has a footprint in Surrey, will build on innovation developing in Surrey.
- Reaching out to a number of industry partners in support, and to education providers (UBC, Kwantlen Polytechnic, post-secondary colleagues), to ensure the proposed program is a niche, not replicating anything similar, but rather a unique program that compliments and doesn't compete with other programs in the province.

- The program:
 - Supports the findings and recommendations of the 2020 Task Force on 'The Future of B.C.'s Food System'.
 - Expands and builds on existing agricultural innovation and technology research strengths at SFU and the commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
 - Adopts a BC Campus approach to enhancing and mobilizing existing capacity across the province, and by training the next generation of BC food producers.
 - Engages producers, industry, governments and communities at all stages of program development and delivery.
 - Strengthens the foundations for new economic opportunities by prioritizing innovation, sustainability and climate change solutions.
- Over the next decade, job opportunities in agriculture in Canada are expected to grow rapidly, with a projected gap in the skills and labour required. Accelerating investment in technology would have a significant impact on efficiency, close the agriculture labour gap and significantly increase agricultural GDP.
- Designing the new undergraduate program with the BSc and BASc will provide students with distinct opportunities to learn to solve problems in agricultural production and sustainability through an interdisciplinary, problem-based education program.
- Three AgriTech Innovation Program Streams (proposed):
 - Stream 1 - Precision Agriculture & Automation: a method of farming that uses technological innovations, including GPS guidance, drones, sensors, soil sampling and precision machinery, to grow crops more efficiently by improving decisions about how to manage each individual piece of land. Can be adopted by farms of all sizes.
 - Stream 2 - Agricultural BioTechnology & Food Security: focus on strategies for enhancing sustainable crop production and a more resilient food system, from traditional breeding method to genomics to identify markers associated with important plant traits.
 - Stream 3 - Circular Agriculture & /climate Change Adaptation: keeping the residuals of agricultural biomass and food processing within the food system as renewable resources; moving towards zero waste.
- The AgriTech program industry partnerships in Surrey help with the design and delivery of the program, with a focus on anticipating how students will structure their experience, not only in class, but outside, where students each year work with farm industry partners.
- The themes for Project and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and activities from year 1 to 4 are structured to allow students to experience working on solving real-world problems with a farm, community and/or industry partner, while acquiring core academic skills (includes Coop and other WIL opportunities).

- Next steps:
 1. Labour market study to match to needs in Surrey
 2. Survey student interest (high schools)
 3. Assess potential graduate programs, certificates, and microcredentials
 4. Continue dialogue with other B.C. post-secondary institutions
 5. Develop full program proposal for BSc and BASc
 6. Continue securing funding and support from industry and community partners for incubator stage
 7. Continue to meet with governments about next steps (Municipalities; B.C. (JEDC, AEST, Agriculture); Government of Canada)
 8. Assist SFU researchers in building new research collaborations
- It is estimated the first cohort of the program will be up and running in two years and earlier for some of the smaller course based opportunities, dependent on student interest. The recruitment to attract students is going to support the scale and timing of the program.

It was reported that a presentation on the Medical School will be presented to the Committee in the spring.

The Committee expressed their appreciation for the presentation, noting their excitement for the program, given that one-third of Surrey's land base is agriculture and that farmers will be looking for new ways to develop (e.g. new technology for blueberry production, etc.).

It was further noted that the province is investing up to \$3 million in a grant program to help increase sustainable and regenerative food production in the province. The agritech grant program is part of the province's economic recovery plan to accelerate the growth of B.C.'s agritech sector and help the province's agritech companies grow and develop technologies to increase domestic food production.

C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

1. PPE Manufacturing

With respect to the recent announcement of PPE manufacturing awards given to various Canadian companies, staff reported Eternity Medical is not included at this time. They recently received their CSA stamp and awaiting the results of the final testing, taken two weeks ago, in order to receive their seal.

2. Drones

With respect to the request at the November 26th meeting for a report on the use of drones in Surrey, it was reported that a preliminary assessment was done and a presentation will be provided to the Committee at the next meeting.

The Committee again expressed their enthusiasm for the use of drones in the City, not only as a marketing tool for the promotion of Surrey, but also as a way to capture before and after images that showcase the positivity of development.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Economic Development Update

Stephen Wu, Manager, Economic Development, provided a brief presentation and update on economic development activity, in terms of economic recovery and support since the last meeting of the Committee.

Comments were as follows:

- Staff are continuing with a lot of outreach to local businesses, connecting businesses to aid and promoting Buy Local and Surrey Store to Door.
- Updated Surrey Store to Door numbers show 14,600+ shoppers and 9,200 visits to Surrey business websites, but intent still exists for in-person shopping. For every five clicks to a Surrey business website, there is one click to find directions to the store. Although many businesses have an online presence, they are finding that many customers are still wanting to visit the actual store; people still value the physical brick and mortar type of stores.
- Surrey Manufacturers continue supporting Surrey's local communities. In addition to the 14,000 N95 masks donated by Eternity Medical to the Legion and 15,000 ear-savers donated by Turnkey Technologies to the Surrey Hospital Foundation, Firetech Manufacturing has announced they will be donating 2,000 face shields to a local care facility.
- As the second wave of the pandemic increases, Surrey Makes PPE manufacturers are looking to at new opportunities to secure larger contracts:
 - J N Alvit applying for \$50 million gowns RFP and also looking at the US where these products are in demand.
 - Large municipalities are inquiring about 95PFEs (N95 equivalent).
- 95PFE manufacturers are able to sell products with their medical device license (MDEL), however they are still required to have FDA NIOSH approval and Health Canada certification to issue their IO.
- Currently the volume of products is quite high. Looking at the total PPE, there has been more than \$11 million in sales, which is anticipated to climb again in January as many businesses are starting to fulfill anticipated orders.
- Investment attraction outreach continues to be a priority for Economic Development, targeting calls to approximately 25 companies each week, focused on specific sectors, including automated manufacturing, fintech, artificial intelligence technology and biotechnology.
- Current initiatives:
 - Economic Recovery Action Plan
 - Surrey Makes PPE

- Surrey Store to Door / Shop Local Upgrade
- Pivoting Your Business Towards Success Workshop Series
- Build Pattullo Campaign
- Emergency Operations Centre
- COVID Resource Centre & Business Communications
- SparkBIZ Program – Business engagement
- Investment Attraction Outreach
- Expedited Permitting

2. **Surrey EconomiQ**

Stephen Wu, Manager, Economic Development, provided a brief presentation on the Surrey EconomiQ data framework, the City's new business intelligence brand.

Comments were as follows:

- Surrey EconomiQ Data Framework is a new program under development, to launch in 2021, that will publish sector reports, semi-annual economic reports, eNewsletters, investment opportunities and will house the Data Framework.
- The Data Framework will offer a holistic view of the municipal economy through data. Over 175 unique datasets will be collected, standardized and placed into a tiered system of performance indicators. This data will be used to create data driven analyses and reports for businesses and potential investment leads.
- Being on the front lines, Economic Development sees the power of data, where to look for leads and how to deal with specific requests. Increasingly staff are getting requests looking at information on residents, business space, etc., in order to make business decisions; the volume is quite substantial. Most often these requests are from investors, looking to get a decision within three to five days. Although the demand is currently being met, as these requests increase, there needs to be continued efficiency in gathering the information to respond in a timely manner.
- Creating the Surrey EconomiQ data framework will also provide insight into Surrey's economy that can be relied upon; not only have the data, but the analytics capability to provide for the projections into the future – one framework to get all the information.
- Key anticipated outcomes:
 - Key performance indicators for the City economy
 - Robust data catalogue for businesses
 - In-depth comparative analyses
 - Cross correlation between the datasets
 - Data-driven projections
 - Macro-level snapshot of Surrey economy
- Timeframe:
 - Preliminary data collection and analysis is done (and will be ongoing)
 - Q2 2021 – Business Ecosystem pilot

- Q3 2021 – limited/Beta product launch
- Late Q4 2021 – public launch
- Data collection partners include: UBC Data Science Institute, KPU, BCIT, SFU, BCStats and Statistics Canada.
- The idea is that whenever an inquiry is received or if any analysis or information is sent out, it will use the Surrey branding.
- Through the Committee, staff will share and ask what other types of information to include; initially will be done once the first data set for the pilot is underway.
- There will be a lot of opportunity for the EconomIQ framework to become a paid service. There is currently no platform available that meets the needs; many people are visualizing, but nobody is gathering the type of information needed.
- Economic Development is also working closely with the Planning Department, as part of the work plan for 2021, creating a guide for business that helps to identify certain Building requirements to speed up the process (e.g. if certain criteria is met without or limited changes, then a process will be in place to move along faster), benefitting both the applicant and the Planning Department. An update will be provided at the next Committee meeting.

E. INFORMATION ITEMS

F. OTHER BUSINESS

G. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Investment & Innovation Impact Committee will be at the call of the Chair.

I. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by Councillor Nagra
Seconded by Councillor Patton
That the Investment & Innovation Impact

Committee adjourn.

Carried

The Investment & Innovation Impact Committee adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

Jennifer Ficocelli, City Clerk

Mayor McCallum, Chair
Investment & Innovation Impact Committee