

STAFF REPORT: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer



REPORT TO: Council
MEETING DATE: January 26. 2009
REPORT NO.: CAO.09.01
SUBJECT: Thornbury Medical Clinic Grant Application
PREPARED BY: Paul Graham, Chief Administrative Officer

A. Recommendations

THAT Council authorize Town of The Blue Mountains to become a co-applicant with Meaford, Grey Bruce Health Services, Meaford Hospital Foundation and North East Grey Health Clinics Inc. for a Rural Economic Development Grant from the Minister of Agriculture, for the purposes of financing, constructing and operating two non-profit municipal health care centres, one to be located in Thornbury and the other in Meaford and;

THAT Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to sign the grant application on behalf of The Blue Mountains.

B. Background

Council will recall at their meeting of April 14, 2008 that the following resolution was passed supporting the construction of the Thornbury Medical Clinic:

“THAT Council publicly declare its commitment to ensure that North East Grey Health Clinics Inc. has the necessary property, in Thornbury, to construct a Medical Clinic and;

THAT Council will ensure that the property is available in a timely manner to facilitate the successful construction of the Thornbury Medical Clinic and;

FUTHER THAT should the Town directly supply land either by transfer or easement, and its sole discretion and in consult with North East Grey Health Clinics Inc., it shall be provided at no cost to North East Grey Health Clinics Inc., being the Town’s contribution to the Project.”

I attach a copy of Council Report CAO.08.07 dated April 14, 2008 for Council’s information.

Since that time, the planning for the Thornbury Medical Clinic has been significantly advanced. At this time the North East Grey Medical Clinic Inc., wishes to proceed with an application for a Rural Economic Development Grant from the Ministry of Agriculture.

A pre-proposal application was forwarded to the Ministry of Agriculture and we provide the following information which was contained in that earlier application:

A. Project Objectives

1. To improve access to health care to the residents of our communities by attracting physicians to our area
2. To support the services provided at our local Hospital by ensuring adequate medical coverage
3. To provide adequate medical coverage in the Nursing Homes in our communities
4. To support a healthy lifestyle for those living and working in our communities
5. To facilitate the economic development of the community by removing the shortage of health resources as a prime economic barrier
6. To directly provide up to ten to fifteen new health care positions in the community

B. Summary of Proposed Project

The project partners are engaged in the financing and construction of two community health care clinics. All five main partners are either non-profit corporations or municipal governments. The lead partner is North East Grey Health Clinics Inc., a non share capital corporation incorporated in Ontario for the specific purpose of financing, constructing and operating two non-profit community health care centres providing medical, health and support services for the general public.

As lead partner, we are responsible for raising the funds required for the major portion of the anticipated costs, planning the facility construction, managing the construction process, and then managing the operations of the facilities in the future. The actual medical services will be provided by six family physicians in each clinic.

The first clinic to be built will be in the Town of Blue Mountains on property located in Thornbury. The second clinic will be built in 3 to 5 years time in the Municipality of Meaford.

Both municipalities are designated as underserved –having insufficient family physicians for the current population – by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. Our local Physician Recruitment Committee has attempted to attract new family physicians for the last four years without success. Potential new physicians have made it abundantly clear that we will not be successful in recruiting physicians unless we build two new clinics and raise money for physician recruitment incentives.

Meaford Hospital, part of the Grey Bruce Health Services organization, will not be able to continue providing adequate emergency services if we cannot draw physicians to our community. Two physicians retired in The Town of Blue Mountains last fall and this brought the situation to a crisis. The present clinic in the Town of Blue Mountains houses two family physicians is not adequate for them and cannot be expanded. The situation in Meaford is not quite as dire at this point. However, of the five current Meaford family physicians, three are within one to three years of retirement and the situation will be critical in the near future.

The five co-applicants are in total agreement that two new clinics are required, the first in Thornbury to handle the immediate need and the second in Meaford to handle the need projected in the near future.

In addition to the obvious health impacts arising from the lack of sufficient family physicians, there are economic barriers to the continued development of the two municipalities. Both municipalities have been experiencing above average population growth composed primarily of new retirees moving to this four season recreational area. The Town of Blue Mountains has experienced greater growth to date and, based upon planned housing and commercial developments, is projected to double its full time population within the next five years. The seasonal population, which is currently twice the full time population, will continue to grow.

Some of the developments such as the IntraWest Blue Mountain development and the Lora Bay Ravens Golf Club housing project are significant and the capital costs of such projects are very large. However, there has been a growing concern expressed by potential developers and potential new residents about the lack of medical resources within the community. The lack of a family health care clinic is defined as one of the main economic barriers to sound, planned and sustainable development.

The lack of a family health care facility also impacts the willingness of younger families with children to move to the area. This is a major economic barrier to more retirees moving to the area since the whole infrastructure of the community requires new workers to service the retirees, from the start of the construction of new housing developments through to the provision of sundry services to support a larger community.

Given the recognition of the medical needs and the need to remove some of the economic barriers, our clinic group has been joined by the two municipalities and the local hospital. In addition we have received a great deal of support to date from service clubs and private individuals.

Land has been donated to the Town of Blue Mountains by a private developer within a Memorandum of Understanding between the developer and Town of Blue Mountains. Under the MOU, sufficient land to house a 6500 sq. ft. building to house six physicians and the related parking service requirements will be donated by the municipality to our clinic group. The appraised value of the donated lands is approximately \$265,000.

Grey Bruce Health Services realizes the importance of new family health care clinics and is contributing the proceeds from the sale of an existing inadequate facility to the clinic fund. The value of this participation is approximately \$375,000.

Each of the two municipalities provided \$25,000 in 2007 to start the support of the Physician Recruitment process quite separate from the new clinic construction.

The Meaford Hospital Foundation is providing \$250,000 to the clinic project. We have received almost \$225,000 in pledges and donations from individual community members without yet starting our full public campaign.

We believe this project is a true community effort which will have positive impacts on community health and the economic well being and development of our key rural area.

Approximately eight new full time career positions will be created within the first clinic, and a further six to eight in the second clinic. In addition, barriers to increased employment opportunities in the area in the form of inadequate health services will be removed.

Recommendation:

Based on the above, we recommend that Council endorse this application and authorize the Town to become a signatory to this application.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

Strong medical systems are a critical part of the development of any sustainable community. One of the goals of our Strategic Plan is to manage growth to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of the community.

Our corporate Mission Statement states, "The Town will realize the community vision through innovative leadership in strong partnerships to provide sustainable services into the future."

By Council supporting the creation of the Thornbury Medical Clinic, Council will demonstrate the innovative leadership anticipated by our Strategic Plan.

D. Environmental Impacts

None

E. Budget Impact

There are no budget impacts for The Blue Mountains arising from the support of this grant application. However, in supporting the Thornbury Medical Clinic, the Town is in the process of purchasing a piece of land fronting on Highway 26 to provide access to the proposed Thornbury Medical Clinic. The cost of this acquisition is currently estimated to be approximately one hundred and twelve thousand dollars (\$112,000) and these costs are included under our Capital Program in the Corporate Administration portion of the 2009 Budget.

F. Attached

CAO Report CAO.08.07 entitled "Thornbury Medical Clinic".

Respectfully submitted,

J.P. (Paul) Graham, P.Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer

For more information, please contact:

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STAFF REPORT: CAO



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MEETING DATE: April 14, 2008
REPORT NO.: CAO.08.07
SUBJECT: Thornbury Medical Clinic
PREPARED BY: Paul Graham, CAO

A. Recommendations

THAT Council publicly declare its commitment to ensure that North East Grey Health Clinics Inc. has the necessary property, in Thornbury, to construct a Medical Clinic and;

THAT Council will ensure that the property is available in a timely manner to facilitate the successful construction of the Thornbury Medical Clinic and;

FURTHER THAT should the Town directly supply land either by transfer or easement, at its sole discretion and in consult with North East Grey Health Clinics Inc., it shall be provided at no cost to North East Grey Health Clinics Inc., being the Town's contribution to the Project.

B. Background

At the Town of The Blue Mountains' Council Meeting of September 10, 2007, North East Grey Health Clinics Inc. made a presentation proposing the construction of a Thornbury Medical Clinic. During that presentation, North East Grey Health Clinics Inc. requested that the Town of The Blue Mountains provide a Thornbury site for the construction of this Clinic.

During their presentation, the Group was adamant that constructing the Thornbury Medical Clinic is a critical component of their physician recruitment and retention strategy.

As a result of this presentation, Council passed the following resolution:

"That Council does hereby refer the North East Grey Health Unit Clinics Inc., Meaford and the Blue Mountains request regarding physician recruitment to the Chief Administrative Officer for review and report back to Council."

Since that time, North East Grey Health Clinics Inc. has submitted a Business Plan for the Project to the Town. This Business Plan has been reviewed and we have concluded that the Business Plan is sound. The Business Plan calls for a Medical Clinic approximately 6500 sq. ft. in size to house six (6) physicians and support staff. The property requirements and building design will allow for expansion to twelve (12) physicians.

Staff has had several meetings with the proponents of the Project and discussed Town-owned sites that would be suitable for the construction of this Thornbury Medical Clinic. We have also facilitated discussions with others to provide additional options for the successful implementation of the Project.

North East Grey Health Clinics Inc. are now entering the fundraising phase of their Project and it would be incredibly beneficial to their Group, should our Council publicly commit to ensuring that land is available for the Project.

A “Dance for Charity” for the Thornbury Medical Clinic is currently scheduled for May 3 at the Beaver Valley Community Centre in Thornbury. We have attached a copy of the notice of this event to this Report.

Staff is comfortable in making this recommendation to Council as we are convinced that there are Town-owned sites available for this Project should a Town-owned site be required to successfully implement the construction of the Thornbury Medical Clinic.

C. The Blue Mountains’ Strategic Plan

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Our Corporate Mission Statement states, “The Town will realize the community vision through innovative leadership in strong partnerships to provide sustainable services into the future.”

By Council supporting the creation of the Thornbury Medical Clinic, Council will demonstrate the innovative leadership anticipated by our Strategic Plan.

D. Budget Impact

Currently there are no identified costs to the Town other than staff time. Ultimately, if the Town were to provide a site for the construction of the Medical Clinic, there would likely be both legal and survey costs associated with this Project. We view those possible costs to be insignificant relative to the public benefit of a Thornbury Medical Clinic. The Town certainly has the financial resources available to be able to fund costs of this nature should that be necessary in the future.

E. Attachments

“Dance for Charity” announcement.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature

CFOS

Rock & Roll "Record Hop"

DANCE FOR CHARITY

PROCEEDS TO THE COMMUNITY FAMILY HEALTH CENTRES FOR THORNBURY AND MEAFORD

SATURDAY MAY 3, 2008
BEAVER VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE - THORNBURY
8PM - "THE MIDNIGHT HOUR"

THE TWIST
AND HULA HOOP
CONTESTS

POODLE SKIRTS &
NOSTALGIC ACCESSORIES
ENCOURAGED!

WITH CFOS DJ'S
Craig Smith & Bob Durant

TICKETS \$20

AVAILABLE AT:

CFOS - OWEN SOUND

CROW'S NEST - COLLINGWOOD

JESSICA'S BOOK NOOK
THORNBURY

STUFF TO READ - MEAFORD

THE "ATTACK" BOX OFFICE
OWEN SOUND

Contact & Register
for "Singles Meet & Mingle" - 6:30 pm
519-538-0261

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