

Director, Business Growth & Entrepreneurship

Job Status:	Permanent Full-Time
Pay & Grade:	\$120,443 - \$150,554 annually Grade 12 (under review)
Hours of Work:	35 Hours per week
Initial location:	Kitchener City Hall
Posting period:	February 6, 2025 – March 6, 2025 at 6:00pm

Overview

Are you a dynamic and visionary leader ready to drive transformation within Kitchener's economy? Are you inspired to attract new companies to our community? Are you passionate about supporting the growth and success of local businesses of all types and sizes? If so, the City is seeking an exceptional individual as its very first Director of Business Growth & Entrepreneurship.

Reporting to the Executive Director of Economic Development, this leadership position will:

- Lead the development, delivery and implementation of major business attraction, retention and growth strategies, partnerships, projects and investments in our community;
- Be a key champion, advocate and partner for the business community, maintaining critical relationships with key business leaders and CEOs;
- Guide the operations of three key business units within the Economic Development team, who provide a range of services to businesses: Business Development, Downtown Development and the Kitchener Market; and,
- Act as the City's lead partner with Waterloo Economic Development Corporation to support foreign direct investment and the attraction of major investments to the community.

Join us to shape the future of our city's economy by overseeing forward-thinking strategies designed to foster business growth, attract diverse industries, and position Kitchener as a hub for innovation and investment. In the near term, this includes:

- Leading a comprehensive strategy to support economic vibrancy within the City's downtown core; and
- Developing a program of work to respond to pressing economic and trade challenges resulting from the current domestic and internal economic climate

Responsibilities

Major Business Growth Initiatives, Partnership & Project Development

- Leads and oversees the implementation of key initiatives, studies and strategies that advance the growth of businesses, jobs and entrepreneurship. These could include, for example, leading the development of new employment areas, strategies to support office growth in Downtown Kitchener, initiatives to launch new incubator/accelerator programs, etc.
- Develops and maintains partnerships with businesses and organizations critical to the growth of businesses, jobs and entrepreneurship.

- Provides advice to Council and corporate leadership and negotiates various contractual agreements with third-party businesses and organizations.
- Represents the City's economic interests in committees, and other forums.

Supervisory & Business Unit Leadership

- Provides strategic leadership and oversight to the Business Growth & Entrepreneurship team, ensuring alignment with corporate goals and Make It Kitchener 2.0, the City's economic development strategy, including directing and evaluating priorities, work programs, resource allocation, and performance.
- Oversees the City's Business Development, Downtown Development and Kitchener Market teams who collectively provide business outreach/ attraction/retention/expansion services across all industries, provide placemaking and vibrancy initiatives, deliver financial incentive programs, provide oversight to City-operated business facilities such as the Kitchener Market, Square Peg, etc., and deliver rental and event programs at Gaukel Block and the Kitchener Market.
- Mentors, supports, and develops staff while fostering collaboration and clear communication across business units and between the City and external partners.
- Sets performance goals, monitors progress, and ensures accountability within the Business Growth & Entrepreneurship Unit.

Business Outreach, Attraction, Retention, Expansion, Partnership & Project Development

- Works closely with economic development partners, such as Waterloo Economic Development Corporation and Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce to support the attraction and retention of major companies to the community.
- Supports the Business Development team in building and maintaining relationships with key employers.
- Works with internal stakeholders to ensure development applications proceed.
- Provides strategic leadership to the City's business incubators and co-working spaces, fostering collaboration and growth.
- Represents the City's interests on various boards and committees as required.
- Performs other related duties as required to support the goals of the Economic Development division.

Requirements

- 4-year bachelor's degree in business management, business administration, economics, marketing or a field related to economic development.
- Relevant training or certification in project management, entrepreneurship, or innovation strategies would be considered an advantage.
- Relevant training or certification in Economic Development (e.g., from the International Economic Development Council, Economic Development Associate of Canada, etc.) or equivalent would be an asset.
- 7 to 10 years of progressive experience in business development, economic development, business management or a related field.
- 5+ years of leadership experience managing teams, projects, and budgets, and overseeing cross-functional initiatives.
- Experience working closely with local businesses, community collaborators, and government agencies to drive economic growth, innovation, and investment in the city.

- Experience in managing partnerships, including working with local businesses, development agencies, and community organizations to build and strengthen business networks.
- Proven track record in strategic planning initiatives including developing and executing business development strategies, securing grants/funding etc.
- Familiarity with principles, practices, theories, trends, policies, programs and resources related to economic development.
- Excellent communication, negotiation, and public relations skills, with experience presenting to senior leadership, councils, and external partners.
- Must have leadership and human relations skills to direct, develop, motivate and support the personal growth of staff.
- Must have the ability to support and project the organization's core values of trust and respect, collaboration, and change and growth, as well as our leadership traits, which are reflected in employees who:
 - Lead by example and expect the same of others;
 - Recognize accomplishments;
 - Collaborate with others to realized shared outcomes;
 - Enable others to be their best;
 - Look beyond today.
- Valid MTO G class driver's license in good standing and access to a personal vehicle.
- Availability to work evenings and weekends.
- Reliable with a good attitude and employment record.

Note: All interested applicants are encouraged to apply. In the event there is no successful applicant with the stated level of education and experience, other applicants will be considered if a combination of their education and experience meets the following pre-determined equivalency:

- 3-Year Degree/Diploma with minimum 10 years related and relevant experience OR
- Undergraduate degree with a Master's degree with minimum 4 years of related and relevant experience

Department/Division: Development Services, Economic Development
Group: Non-Union/Management
Competition Number: 2025-065
Job Code: 1530
Number of positions: 1

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