



TOWN OF MINTO

MEETING DATE: May 21, 2024
REPORT TO: Mayor and Council
SERVICE AREA: Economic Development
SUBJECT: EC DEV 2024-010 – Structural Grant #MT02– Reroot Organic Farm, 5642 11th Line, Harriston

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT Council of the Town of Minto receives report EC DEV 2024-010 regarding Structural Grant #MT02– Reroot Organic Farm and approves Structural Grant #MT02 for \$957.00.

BACKGROUND:

The Structural Grant Program was initiated in 2015 to encourage significant commercial, industrial, residential, or institutional projects that substantially renovate, restore, improve or update a building or structure of key vacant property and accomplish more than one of the following:

- Address structural and life safety issues to create usable and efficient floor space.
- Improve property standards or preserve architectural significance.
- Remediate a brownfield site, or improve the environment by planting trees, protecting habitat, or other methods to enhance the natural ecosystems.
- Upgrade public infrastructure such as sewers, water, storm, roadway, sidewalks.
- Preserve or enhance employment opportunities.

A variety of elements are considered under this grant program including:

- Building Structural Integrity
- Life Safety/Emergency
- Usable & Efficient Floor Space
- Accessibility
- Brownfield Remediation
- Improving the Environment
- Upgrading/Improving Public Infrastructure
- Creating Housing
- Energy Efficiency
- Enhancing Urban Design

The 2024 CIP budget is \$50,000, and this is the eighth application of 2024.

COMMENTS:

Reroot Organic Farm is owned by Caitlin Hall and is a 70-acre property located outside of Harriston. They grow more than 40 types of vegetables and herbs, produce a wide range of fruit, raise chickens, lay hens, pigs, sheep, and beef cattle outdoors on pasture and keep honeybees to pollinate the crops and produce honey. Reroot Organic has an on-farm store and features Reroot products as well as other local, organic products from neighbouring farms. Reroot is a member of the Wellington County Taste Real Program and is a key agri-tourism destination in Minto.

Reroot Organic Farm is planning to renovate the upper level of the building that currently houses the farm store. They plan to insulate, install washable wall, floor and ceiling panels, proper LED lighting and a landing at the top of the stairs. The space will be retrofitted into a kitchen facility that will have full kitchen appliances and will meet the requirements of a certified kitchen by the Wellington, Dufferin, Guelph Health Unit.

The purpose of adding the kitchen is to create value-added meals (freezer and preserves) with the intent of using excess of what's in season to limit food waste. Reroot Organic would also like to host field dinners with local chefs with food produced on the farm as well as host workshops on food preservation and an event space.

Director of Building and Planning Services Terry Kuipers and I have reviewed the application, and a copy of the evaluation criteria is included as part of the report.

The next Economic Development and Planning Committee (EDPC) meeting date is not until June 6, 2024, therefore this application was reviewed and approved by the Committee via email on May 15, 2024.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

The total cost of materials for this project is \$20,551.89, however the cost for eligible items is \$2,900. Director Kuipers and I have reviewed the application and the criteria for funding. Unlike our other grants that are matching up to a certain amount, this program is not a matching program and grants up to \$40,000 could be approved. We generally would like to see at least a 3:1 return on our investment.

Staff support a grant of \$957. If this grant is approved, \$41,959.52 will remain in the CIP budget for 2024.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

GOAL 3: Strong Vibrant Economy

Progressively support our local businesses while leveraging Minto's competitive advantages to attract new economic investment.

PREPARED BY: Belinda Wick-Graham, Director, Economic & Community Development

RECOMMENDED BY: Mark Potter, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

BUSINESS NAME: Reroot Organic Farm
ADDRESS: 5642 11th Line, Harriston, ON

Community Improvement Plan Structural Component Checklist

Under Section 4.0 of the Community Improvement Plan the Town could offer inside the urban areas for significant industrial, commercial, residential or institutional re-developments that accomplish **more than one** of the following (preference will be given to those that address multiple criteria):

- i) address structural and life safety issues to create usable and efficient floor space
- ii) improve property standards or preserve architectural significance
- iii) remediate a brownfield site, or improve the environment by planting trees, protecting habitat, or other methods to enhance the natural ecosystems,
- iv) upgrade public infrastructure such as sewer, water, storm, roadway, sidewalks
- v) preserve or enhance employment opportunities
- vi) create affordable housing in a range of occupancies
- vii) enhance fire protection such as sprinkler systems, fire separations and similar;
- viii) improve energy efficiency or reduce water and sewer needs
- ix) enhance urban design on and around the subject lands and adjacent public space as well as linkages to trails, parks, core areas and other focal points.

Below are criteria the Town seeks to address when to evaluating structural grant applications. When marking for a project indicate with a number whether the work is:

Minor = 1 Moderate = 2 Major = 3

1. Building Structural integrity Total 0

Footing ___ Foundation ___ Floor joists ___ Ceiling joists ___ Rafters/trusses ___
Walls ___ Main beam(s) ___ Other _____

2. Life Safety/ emergency Total 1

Exit signage ___ Emergency lighting ___ Fire/CO2 Alarms ___ Extinguishers 1
Firewall Separation ___ Fire Doors ___ Sprinkler ___ Siamese connection ___
Other: ___

3. Usable and efficient floor space Total 1

Increase ceiling height ___ Architectural restoration/retention ___
Accessible washroom ___ **Main floor commercial 1 (Upper Floor)** Upper floor residential
___ Increased density ___ Other _____

4. Brownfield Remediation Total 0

Phase 1 ___ Phase 2 ___ Site Specific Risk Assessment ___ Record of Site Condition ___
Monitoring program ___
Other _____

5. Improve Environment Total 1

Landscape plan ___ Tree planting ___ Manage Stormwater ___ Add/Protect Habitat ___
Windbreak ___ Buffer zone ___ Riverbank protection/enhancement ___
Species at risk ___ **Other – Zero Waste**

6. Upgrade/Improve Public Infrastructure Total 0

Sanitary sewer collection main ____ Water distribution main ____ Oversizing of main ____
 Roadway widening ____ Road Turning lane ____ Curb and gutter ____
 Public Sidewalk ____ LED Street lighting On-site Storm water retention ____
 Energy efficient lighting ____ Other _____

7. Employment Opportunities Total 3

Creates new direct jobs 1 Retains existing jobs 1 Addresses skill shortage ____
Construction/Spin-off jobs 1 Fills market demand ____
 Other _____

8. Housing Total 0

New affordable rental housing ____ Affordable condominium housing ____
 Affordable freehold semi or townhouse ____ Housing for seniors ____
 Special needs housing ____ Other _____

9. Energy Efficiency Total 1

Increased insulation ____ Window/Door upgrade ____ Passive energy benefit ____
 New Furnace/cooling technology ____ Low flow fixtures ____ Graywater recycling ____
 Solar technology ____ Alternative energy ____ Rainwater harvesting ____
Other: LED Lighting

10. Enhance Urban Design Total 0

Professional Landscape plan ____ Native species ____ Boulevard tree planting ____
 LED Street Lighting ____ Sidewalk/trail link ____ Contribution to parkland ____
 Design consistency ____ Architectural rehab ____ Compatible Façade design ____
 Exterior Accessibility (ramps etc.)
 Other _____

Total 1 through 10 Grand Total: 7

The leverage ratio and the total score assist provide a numerical basis to help compare applications and establish funding amounts. Final decision rests with Town Council.

Calculate Leverage Ratio

Total Project Cost \$<a>	Total Funding Requested \$	Leverage Ratio \$<a>/
e.g. \$200,000	\$40,000	5:1
\$20,551.89 (Total)		
\$2,900 (Eligible)	\$957	Leverage Ratio \$3: \$1

Notes:

- The owner is building a new kitchen inside an existing building to eliminate food waste, creating additional revenue streams for an on-farm business.

- Health and Safety improvements are being made including Trusscore walls, flooring and ceiling.
- This expansion will result in the hiring of an employee as well as retaining an existing employee.
- Will increase visitation to the farm and to Minto with the addition of field dinners, event space.
- Will help build community knowledge around local food and preservation.
- Local contractors are being used.