Region of Waterloo
Planning, Development and Legislative Services
Community Planning

To: Committee of the Whole
Meeting Date: April 13, 2021
Report Title: Workplace Count 2021

1. Recommendation:
   For information

2. Purpose / Issue:
   To inform Council and the public that the Region of Waterloo, in coordination with local municipalities and the WaterlooEDC, will again be undertaking a Workplace Count to collect information from workplaces across Waterloo Region. This information will be used for planning for employment growth, and for supporting local business.

3. Strategic Plan:
   Tracking and monitoring employment data contributes to Strategic Focus Area 1: Thriving Economy.

4. Key Considerations:
   The Workplace Count is undertaken every two or three years. It was most recently conducted in 2018, and will be carried out again in 2021 to align with the year of Statistics Canada’s Census of Population and Census of Agriculture.

   This summer’s survey will also gather information about the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions on local businesses. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the survey methodology has been modified.

5. Background:
   From May to August 2021, the Workplace Count will be conducted in cities and rural settlement and employment areas across Waterloo Region. The Workplace Count is essentially a census of businesses and other places of employment. The information collected is not available from any other source. It includes:
• Type of workplace, such as software development, food manufacturing, or education;
• Number of full-time, part-time and seasonal employees;
• Square footage of occupied space; and
• Business attributes such as date established, location

The information compiled from the Workplace Count helps the Region and local municipalities to:

• Create a complete picture of the types of businesses and sectors in Waterloo Region, and where jobs are located;
• Support business’ needs by planning for adequate land, sufficient services and complementary businesses;
• Understand the space usage, requirements and vacancies of different types of businesses; and,
• Grow the Region’s economy by supporting business attraction and retention.

Students hired by the Region will contact employers to collect this information. The survey method for the 2021 Workplace Count will be adjusted due to COVID-19. The surveyors will visit sites to verify the workplace locations, however rather than entering the business, most contact will be through phone calls and email. Employers can complete an online version of the questionnaire, or fax/mail a paper copy. Larger employers will be contacted in coordination with Area Municipal staff. Home-based and farm businesses will not be surveyed.

6. Area Municipality Communication and Public/Stakeholder Engagement:

Area Municipality Communication:

The Workplace Count project is guided by a Municipal Advisory Group, with area municipal representatives from community planning and economic development departments, as well as the WaterlooEDC and the Region’s Office of Economic Development.

Public/Stakeholder Engagement:

More information about this project is available at the project website: www.region.waterloo.on.ca/workplacecount. Communications materials are being developed using the tagline “Count Your Business In.”

7. Financial Implications:

The approved 2021 Community Planning operating budget includes a provision of $130,000 for the Workplace Count, to be funded from the Community Planning Capital Reserve.
8. **Conclusion / Next Steps:**

   The Workplace Count will launch on May 10th to businesses and other workplaces. Communication with the business community will occur throughout the summer.

9. **Attachments / Links:**

   Nil

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