Open Orangeville Business

Town of Orangeville

COVID-19 Business Recovery Plan 2020-21

Orangeville
Historic Charm Dynamic Future

We're Open
Welcome
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Economic Development and Culture

Responsibilities: Business, Tourism and Culture

The following three-phased recovery plan is presented as a fluid document, with both short- and longer-term objectives and actions that will be added, changed and modified as recovery from the pandemic progresses, timelines change, and unforeseen, new issues arise.

In keeping with the Province's guidelines, response and recovery phases may occur in sequential order, concurrently or even regress as surges of the virus appear and public health measures change. All actions taken will reflect directives provided by the Province, including a tightening of certain actions or a progression to the following stage based on requirements of the Province and local Public Health.

Flexibility in the implementation of the plan will be critical. Staff will interview and survey representatives across all business sectors to identify emerging trends and issues so that appropriate initiatives, tools and technologies can be implemented to support business recovery efforts. The office will continue to explore best practices locally, nationally and abroad for innovative strategies that can further a robust business ecosystem in both the short and longer term.

In recognition of the Town's Strategic Plan – Orangeville Forward and its goal of Economic Vitality, the Economic Development & Culture division will continually assess and respond to the immediate needs of the business community while working towards implementing recovery efforts that increase the Town's resiliency to future crises and overall economic health.

Considerations

Acknowledging that the Federal and Provincial governments have greater capacity, tools and programs to provide widespread assistance to the business community; the Town's role is to share information and provide assistance in accessing these resources.

Recognising that the Town is not allowed to provide direct financial assistance to businesses as a result of bonusing regulations within the Municipal Act, the Town can:

Advocate

Play both advocacy and support roles with the other levels of government

Support

Be as flexible as possible, within its jurisdiction, to support business recovery by making its services easy to access and understand, removing barriers

Stimulate

Stimulate local recovery by moving ahead with infrastructure projects

Plan

Initiate discussion on a new Community Improvement Plan that would support long-term goals, including initiatives for local businesses and job creation

Identify

Identify and share best practices relating to recovery

Encourage

Encourage the community to invest and shop locally

Outlook

The COVID-19 crisis has impacted all business sectors within the Town of Orangeville, although there has been wide variation in the severity of the impact and the specific challenges faced by each sector, business size and stage of business development. Particular focus will be required for small and medium sized ventures, operations under five years in operation, and specific sectors that include retail, food and beverage, tourism, arts and culture.

Things to consider ...

- Safety
- Economic Recovery
- Planning
- Specific Challenges
- Access to Support
- Embrace Innovation

Partners

Recovery from an economic development perspective will include input from key economic stakeholders, including, but not limited to:

1 Business Focused Groups

The Town's Business and Economic Development Committee (BEDAC), Dufferin Board of Trade (DBOT), Provincial SBEC Network, Centre for Business and Economic Development and local financial institutions, post-secondary institutions, business participants, Orangeville Business Improvement Area (OBIA)

2 Tourism & Cultural Stakeholders

Cultural Plan Task Force (CPTF), miscellaneous arts organizations, Theatre Orangeville, OBIA, Blues and Jazz Festival, Island Lake Conservation Authority, Orangeville based tourism, arts, culture businesses

Response

We will emerge with businesses positioned not just to recover from this pandemic, but to thrive.

Phase I recovery concentrated on adhering to requirements of the Province and Public Health officials to ensure the protection, health and well-being of the business community. This remains in effect for the duration of any Declaration of Emergency.

Objectives

- Adhering to Provincial and Public Health requirements, support efforts to ensure the protection, health and well-being of the business community
- Identify and respond to the needs and challenges of business owners during closure periods
- Ensure that owners are informed of regulations and initiatives and can access programs that will support them and their employees

Phase I - *Response*

What was done

Action
Creation of online recovery portal

- Covid-19 web page introduced to provide and clearly communicate information on Federal/provincial programs to support businesses, including CERB/CEWS/CABA/CERCA/RRRF/Essential Workplaces, and municipal relief for late payment fees, off peak electricity rates, etc.

Action
Situational impact assessment

- Issued with first survey of 191 business (March 31 – April 6) to:
  - identify immediate issues and needs,
  - establish benchmark for future impact surveying
- Idenfitied that future surveying will be completed at critical points in recovery to help inform further actions

Action
Communication

- Communication of information, resources, initiatives, and services delivered via website, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and expanded through utilization of all Town media and social media accounts

Action
Proactive outreach and support to business community across all sectors

- Guidance, advice and support to entrepreneurs throughout community on specific business-related issues, Covid programs, and support in accessing programs needed
- Mentorship for business-to-business support on specific business topics
- Utilization of existing bank of business experts/volunteers to expand response to specific needs of the business community

Action
Buy local initiative launched

- Buy local initiative launched through existing social media accounts including Instagram. Profiling and promotion of local entrepreneurs offering on-line services/products and “Take out Tuesday” initiative created

Phase I - *Response*

What was done

Action
Online business webinars

- Promotion of relevant externally offered learning opportunities researched and then promoted on website/social media
- On-line 'Ask the Expert' series launched and ongoing. Topics selected to reflect immediate and anticipated needs of local businesses

Action
Advocacy

- Situational/issue specific advocacy for business related relief opportunities, including continued off peak rate prices for electricity usage and for larger scale relief initiatives from the province/federal government.

Action
Outreach to Manufacturing Sector for opportunities

- Contact established with manufacturing sector to promote PPE production opportunities
- Seven local manufacturers connected directly with FedDev

Action
Tourism Strategy and Action Plan

- 2020 Tourism Strategy and Action Plan launched in May and will include Covid recovery strategies targeted to support this hard-hit industry. orangevilletourism.ca website enhanced and page created to inform the public with regular updates on the project and to learn about upcoming opportunities to engage
- Arts-based initiatives promoted and available via website/social media

Action
Promotion of the Arts

- Maintain initiatives to support and promote local artists where possible

Action
Research Best Practices

- Identify and include best practices into mid and long-term plans where feasible.
- Begin to research and build future promotional plans for Orangeville as destination

Phase II - *Relaunch*

Phase 2 recovery continues to focus on public health and work place safety as the municipality aligns with the Province to introduce required health and safety protocols and a gradual, staged re-opening of public spaces and businesses.

Objectives

- Support businesses to prepare for reopening through education and communication of protocols required. Assist businesses to adapt to "new normal" practices and procedures that are in place
- With focus on business retention, assist with reintegration efforts and completion of detailed analysis of sector needs through in-depth surveying
- Explore workforce implications and trends

What's completed/in progress

Action

Share and support reopening preparedness protocols/reintegration

- Protocol guidelines, information and resources for business reopening shared using a variety of communication strategies
- Guidance and information provided to business owners on one-to-one basis for re-integration planning to assist with re-opening protocols, risk mitigation
- "Ask the Expert" session focused on preparedness, protocols and risk management (June) and promoting tools created by division

Action

PPE Database established

- Database of local and Provincial resources for PPE purchasing published to support business reopening efforts

Action

Orangeville Business Resiliency Map

- GIS map created for completion by businesses across all sectors to share information regarding their operational status, special considerations and requirements for public awareness and consumption
- Promotion of interactive map to business sectors and then to community at large

Phase II - *Relaunch*

What's completed/in progress

Action
Tourism Strategy and Action Plan

- Surveying and stakeholder interviews conducted to identify issues, gaps and needs of tourism and culture sectors as part of SWOT analysis
- Identification of supports to be implemented in short and long term to address sector

Action
Expand role of Business and Economic Development Advisory Committee (BEDAC)

- BEDAC re-established and first meeting held
- Committee Terms of Reference revised, presented for committee review and submitted for Council approval
- BEDAC utilized to support situational impact assessment (pulse of business community/surveying and outreach for impact, status, needs) and sectoral focused support required for business re-opening.
- Identification of best practices, gaps, support of divisional efforts

Action
Launch business retention initiatives

- In-depth business surveying for situational impact assessment through shift from online surveying to targeted, sectoral interviewing of business community, commencing with tourism/culture, retail and manufacturing sectors (high impact businesses).
- Identify challenges and needs, inclusive of workforce planning requirements, and creation of customized responses to assist

Action
Workforce planning

- Support workforce opportunities and matching through active promotion of findyourjob.ca portal available through County of Dufferin and focused on local opportunities
- Solicit data and impact analysis from Waterloo-Wellington-Dufferin Workforce Planning Board (WPB) on local impacts.

Phase II - *Relaunch*

What's completed/in progress

Action
Review of municipal practices/bylaws

- Identify opportunities to adjust municipal practices and bylaws to support retail/food service re-integration efforts, i.e. on street patio and merchandise on the boulevard

Action
Showcase cultural and artistic talents

- Shift to delivery of online/virtual community events and promotion -Utility Box Art Display program expanded to include Alder Mural Program and solicitation of submissions from local artists/promotion of successful proponents

Action
Support preparedness for Infrastructure Projects

- Prepare for tourism-focused infrastructure projects and potential stimulus funding with local businesses and job creation front of mind.
- Identify opportunities to expand downtown venues

Phase III - *Recover*

Phase 3 occurs as all business sectors have transitioned from re-integration to more routine and regular operations, with acknowledgement that “new normal” practices and procedures are in place. Public and worker health and safety remain top priorities.

Objectives

- Plan for and encourage business uptake of innovations, processes and services that will protect and expand revenue generating capacities
- Resume regular efforts to fulfill the Town’s Economic Development Strategy and new Tourism Strategy and Action Plan
- Complete internal review for new normal efficiencies and best practices to be implemented ongoing

Anticipated actions

Potential Action

Provision of learning/planning opportunities for SMEs

- Online learning opportunities continue and build on previously offered seminars
- Resumption of in-person events and workshops as protocols permit
- Concerted effort to promote digitalization, encourage uptake and adoption of revenue generating/cost saving technologies and tools

Potential Action

Situational Impact assessment

- Monitor impact of partial/full re-opening efforts, needs identification by business community and gauge long term impact of crisis
- Utilize combination of in-depth and online surveying

Potential Action

Advocacy

- Support efforts to secure programs, incentives and relief measures

Phase III - *Recover*

Potential Action

Programming

- Recovery and growth support planning- sectors and conditions will dictate
- Resumption of implementation of Economic Development Strategy

Potential Action

Workforce Development

- Partner with local college for workforce development initiatives following input from business community/business clusters and review of their future plans

Potential Action

Infrastructure stimulus projects - tourism/cultural focus

- Implementation of approved provincial/federal shovel ready infrastructure stimulus projects

Potential Action

Implementation of Orangeville Tourism Strategy and Action Plan

- Adoption of Orangeville Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (January 2021) and full implementation of plan commences with emphasis on focused recovery plan for tourism, entertainment, arts and culture, hospitality sectors
- Marketing and promotional tools developed and implemented to showcase community and encourage domestic visitation
- Delivery of established arts and culture programs and expansion of cultural initiatives

Potential Action

Examine new Community Improvement Plan (CIP)

- examine opportunities for new CIP focused on revitalizing, strengthening and diversifying local economy
- Expand targeted area of focus to include industrial area along with Downtown core
- Prepare for Council consideration and 2021 budget submission

Phase III - *Recover*

Potential Action

Preparedness and mitigation planning

- Best practices to inform future strategic planning

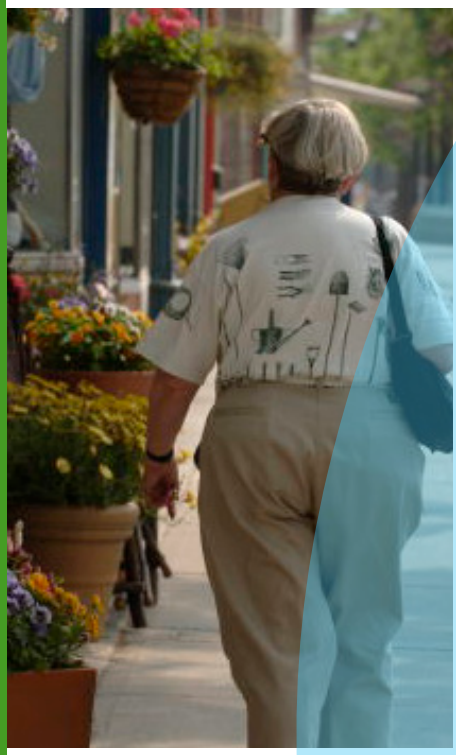
Potential Action

Review and adoption of new internal processes impacting external practices

- Review systems and practices implemented, internal use of online tools and adoption of digitalization for best practices moving forward
- Assess cost efficiencies through adoption of new normal practices within division/ organization and implement where warranted

Open Orangeville

Business



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