

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor & Members of City Council
Chambers of Commerce
Media

Date: June 12, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 – Update

SUMMARY

Despite not receiving support from Opposition parties, we will continue to fight to get support to Canadians with disabilities. We have also launched a business hotline to help organizations navigate these uncertain times. In addition, we have launched the new Digital Main Street program, the post COVID promise, and we have updated the travel restrictions to help re-unite families.

UPDATES

Support for Canadians with Disabilities:

We also continue to express our steadfast support to Canadians living with disabilities. Unfortunately, the Conservatives are blocking our efforts to create a special one-time increase to the disability tax credit, that will help support people with disabilities during these unprecedented times. By choosing partisan games and refusing to even debate the bill, they are preventing Canadians who need help now from getting the support they need. We'll continue to work with the other opposition parties to ensure passage of this important bill and invite the Conservatives to do the same.

New Digital Main Street Program:

Traditional Main Street businesses in the retail, restaurant, and hospitality sectors have been among the hardest hit by the pandemic, as a result in-person commerce has been halted. As you know, our Government has implemented a comprehensive economic plan in response to COVID-19, which includes the Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) and the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF). Through the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) FedNor and FedDev will collectively provide almost \$300 million in support to SMEs in Ontario.

Minister Joly announced an investment of \$50 million from the RRRF to launch the digital Main Street Program (DMS). DMS will help 23,000 SME's across Ontario build out their digital and e-commerce capabilities (website development, e-commerce adoption, digital marketing, digital supply chain management, etc.).



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This is a multi-level platform that will offer differing levels of service to businesses based on their needs (from entry level e-commerce adoption, to sophisticated HR or supply chain management software adoption). Businesses will be eligible for grants for digital adoption, and free on-going technical support and advice.

This program is being delivered by partner organizations, including the 315+ local Business Improvement Areas that make up the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA). The program will be available in every community across the Province of Ontario and our partner organizations will be hiring 1400+ students in the coming weeks to support the delivery of the program.

SMEs, Business Improvement Areas, and Chambers of Commerce who are interested in applying can sign up for the Digital Main Street Program at the following link:

<https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalmainstreet.ca%2Fontario%2F&data=02%7C01%7C%7Cec66fa2c2bac458e6b8f08d80eddc5d2%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637275695487515479&sdata=hKw2UIAis6mJn3ULJ9dSsIMqIOtVkDEicaGyl%2BTyKbU%3D&reserved=0>

SMEs and Chambers of Commerce who are interested in applying can sign up for the Recovery Activation Program (RAP) at the following link:

<https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fsupportbusiness.bot.com%2FRAP%2F&data=02%7C01%7C%7Cec66fa2c2bac458e6b8f08d80eddc5d2%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637275695487515479&sdata=1SAonpewFMvHwSjq2gf3389anE3L%2BZCtDapPzBMI32U%3D&reserved=0>

Hotline for entrepreneurs, small businesses, charities and not-for-profits:

We have launched a hotline service to help entrepreneurs and small business owners, including not-for-profit organizations and charities, navigate these uncertain times.

People with pressing financial needs can call 1-866-989-1080 to speak with an accountant or a business advisor.

Post COVID Promise:

Minister Ng announced that our government is partnering with the private sector, including the Business Council of Canada, on their POST Promise program. This initiative calls on businesses to commit to five key public health measures – like physical distancing and handwashing – to protect customers and employees.

We encourage all business owners – whether you have a restaurant, a tech start-up, or a boutique – to join in today at postpromise.com.

Travelling to Canada:

We have made limited exemptions to allow immediate family members of Canadians and permanent residents, to enter Canada. People entering Canada MUST self-isolate for 14 days.

May I, once again, express my sincere appreciation to all residents, our front-line workers, essential service providers, government partners at all levels, businesses and students, for your ongoing efforts to help in this time of crisis. We are in this together! Your daily efforts are ensuring that we will get through this together. If you require any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Enjoy your weekend.

Stay safe.