

Covid-19 Business Support and Economic Stimulus Action Plan County of Simcoe

April 17, 2020

Initiatives & Actions	Dept.(s)	Timing & Status
Financial Support		
Advocate to federal and provincial governments for immediate funding (grants, loans) and rent relief measures to support small business	EDO	In Process Covid-19 business survey results shared with MPs and MPPs to advocate for financial supports and rent relief for small businesses Covid-19 business survey results shared with Western Ontario Wardens Caucus (WOWC) Participate in discussions with industry associations (i.e. Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME), Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO), Economic Developers' Council of Ontario (EDCO)), and provide regional perspective and information to support their efforts of advocating for financial support to businesses
Implement property tax relief measures	Finance	Council approved property tax relief measures at April 14 th Meeting
Ask landlords to pass along tax relief		
As directed by Council, seek guidance from Province regarding municipal financial support to small businesses	Finance, Legal, EDO	In Process – Letter to Minister Clark sent April 17 with copies to Simcoe MPP's
Provide Free Public Transit on LINX	Transit	In Process Free transit service underway.
Provide rent relief measures for County business tenants where appropriate	Finance	The County has provided rent relief measures where appropriate and will continue to keep in contact with tenants regarding any further actions needed.

Advocate on behalf of the business community for long term recovery programs.	EDO	<p>In Process</p> <p>Providing information and input to regional stakeholders/organizations, industry associations and all levels of government regarding local business needs to help inform program development</p> <p>Results of additional survey work to be shared</p>
Business Outreach, Support & Resources		
<p>Launch a dedicated resource portal for businesses and partners that is updated daily with government resources, funding, virtual learning opportunities, resources for remote work, multilingual resources and more.</p> <p>Promote the business portal and resources through Economic Development Network, social media channels, etc.</p>	EDO	<p>In Process</p> <p>Daily updates and ongoing promotion of Business Resources portal.</p> <p>See https://edo.simcoe.ca/covid-19-business-resources</p>
Lead, partner on, and promote sector-based information sharing on best practices for management of the Covid-19 situation.	EDO	<p>In Process</p> <p>Skype session with Manufacturers held March 2019. Additional manufacturing session in planning stage</p> <p>Participating in and promote B2B forums for manufacturers to ask questions, share knowledge and best practices (i.e.: Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium portal).</p> <p>Promoting existing virtual learning opportunities and engage the network to identify any additional topics or needs for future development.</p> <p>Working closely with the Advanced Manufacturing Supercluster, the Trillium Network for Advanced Manufacturing and other relevant manufacturing</p>

		<p>partners to gather information on programming to share with local industry as well as share insight on local needs and opportunities.</p> <p>Participating in weekly TIAO update calls and HSTCI Town Halls with Minister MacLoud. Encourage businesses and lower tier municipalities to participate in tourism industry Town Halls, surveys and weekly meetings.</p>
<p>Engage with Simcoe County Entrepreneurship Ecosystem (CFDCs and SBECs) to determine if additional capacity is needed to provide advisory support to help businesses wanting to access government funding or programs. Participate in/support B2B portal for small businesses.</p>	EDO	<p>In Process</p> <p>Outreach commenced and Ecosystem Meeting scheduled to evaluate status.</p>
<p>Respond to Covid-19 related inquiries from industry working with relevant County departments and external organizations. Facilitate connections to suppliers, government supports or partners where applicable.</p> <p>Provide one on one support to businesses wanting to access government grants or programs.</p>	EDO	<p>In Process</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Build awareness about opportunities to pivot to adjust to changes in this Covid-19 situation.</p>	EDO	<p>In Process</p> <p>Promoting local business stories</p> <p>Promoting and exploring tools to help businesses adapt to offering services online</p> <p>Investigating opportunities for virtual events with business community (speakers, partners)</p>
<p>Provide business outreach and promotion of relevant resources, including support to</p>	EDO	In Process

companies that are re-tooling operations in response to the pandemic.		Providing liaison service to bridge businesses with contacts and resources needed in order to quickly respond to the production needs for PPE Work with Procurement to measure supply and demand needs to share with industry and relevant stakeholders
Workforce Alignment		
Work with employment partners to promote and match job seekers with available opportunities and relevant programming	EDO	In Process Engagement with employment partners underway (ie. Employment Ontario Offices)
Launch and promote County of Simcoe led job portal	Ontario Works, IT, EDO	In Process Job site in development
Liaison with the Agricultural sector on maintaining the Seasonal Workers Agricultural Program (SWAP) in Simcoe County	EDO	In Process Connected Agricultural Association, Emergency Management and Health Unit over implementation of federal regulations and guidelines. SWAP workers arrived April 9-17 and workers went into self-isolation for 14 days. Health unit following up with employers.
Economic Development Network Collaboration and Research		
Lead County-wide Covid-19 Business Impact Survey to gather information on business impacts, concerns and needs. Provide updates and customized reports to municipal partners. Conduct a second survey in the coming weeks to monitor the situation and impact of stimulus efforts from all levels of government.	EDO	In Process Survey 1 Complete. Assessing parameters for additional survey work.

Ongoing engagement of the regional economic development network to encourage knowledge sharing, alignment of efforts and promotion of resources. Create a collaborative working document and update in real time for all partners to continuously communicate.	EDO	In Process ED Network meeting held March 26 and April 16, updates provided twice per week and ongoing engagement with members of the network.
Ongoing engagement with provincial network (EDCO, WOWC) to share knowledge and best practices for economic development measures to support businesses	EDO	In Process
Research projects on topics identified by the municipal network. i.e Rent relief information report.	EDO	In Process Rent relief report complete
Business Promotion		
Launch buy local online campaign to promote all Simcoe County food and beverage operators, retailers and artisans that are open for delivery, curb-side pick-up options, delivery and online sales.	EDO, Tourism	In Process Campaign launched through Tourism and EDO channels April 9 th
Promoting manufacturers and businesses that have pivoted operations as part of the #strongertogether campaign through corporate and economic development channels.	EDO, Service Simcoe	In Process Campaign launched
Promote PPE needs of the County and local health care providers to industry	EDO, Procurement	In Process Letter sent to industry and promotion through social media channels ongoing

Compile central database of companies re-tooling operations to provide PPE to bridge businesses	EDO	In Process Information posted on EDO website
Potential Broader Economic Stimulus		
Consider establishing an Economic Recovery Committee to obtain industry input on priority needs	EDO	TBD
Compile a list of potential stimulus funding projects that would likely align with the expected stimulus funding criteria from provincial and federal levels of government	All Departments	In Process
Complete funding applications for priority/relevant stimulus funding projects	Relevant Department to lead with Finance support	As stimulus funding is announced
Advance key County projects to stimulate the local economy	All Departments	TBD
Re-instate the Economic Development Funding Program in 2021 with a focus on projects that align with local and County Economic Development Strategies	EDO	For Draft 2021 Budget and Workplan
Continue to implement Lake Simcoe Regional Airport Strategic Plan	LSRA with EDO support	As resources permit
Move forward with all planned procurement contract opportunities, award as soon as possible within Covid-19 guidelines. Monitor for any Provincial “fast track” procurement process changes.	Procurement	As resources permit
Review User Fees By-Law in relation to reducing/eliminating fees to help keep the economy moving	All Departments with Finance support	As resources permit

Ensure all Development Applications not only continue to be processed, but expedited	Planning	As resources permit
Development Charges Considerations	EPE with Finance support	BILD has indicated they will be coming forward seeking DC payment deferrals and waiving of indexing. Adjustments to the DC program are to be funded through the general tax levy.
Economic Development Strategy		
Incorporate Covid-19 Economic Recovery and Stimulus Actions into Draft Economic Development Strategy and re-evaluate plans taking into account the potential impact of a recession late 2020, early 2021.	EDO	In Process Draft Economic Development Strategy in development