



## MEDIA RELEASE

# MORE TASK FORCE INITIATIVES APPROVED AS STRATFORD PREPARES FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

*Stratford City Council Greenlights Patio Extensions, Boardwalk installation, Stratford Summer Music MusicBarge and Streetside Live Projects*

Stratford, ON – June 23, 2020 ... **The Stratford Economic Response and Recovery Task Force (SERRTF) has had several new projects approved by City Council. The latest SERRTF projects are geared to support businesses in their recovery from COVID-19 and include: downtown Patio Extensions and Boardwalk Installation, Stratford Summer Music's MusicBarge, and Streetside Live program.** Additionally, the Stratford Economic Response & Recovery Task Force's recommendation to waive associated 2020 fees for outdoor café licenses was also approved.

*Details pertaining to the projects listed below:*

**Patio Extensions and Boardwalk Installation:** Following the Ontario government permitting restaurants and bars to open patios, the City of Stratford is allowing a temporary seasonal patio extension program to support local restaurants and establishments to accommodate more dine-in patrons within extended temporary patios, while complying with health and safety measures during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Patio Extensions and Boardwalk Installation program permits the extension of patios over the sidewalk space adjacent to a restaurant building, and the installation of a boardwalk, a wooden causeway, over municipal parking spaces for the 2020 patio season until November 1, 2020.

**Stratford Summer Music's MusicBarge:** Stratford Summer Music will install and operate a mobile MusicBarge on the Avon River. The barge will showcase artists from Stratford and surrounding areas with performances from 2pm and 4pm on Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons July 24, to Aug. 23, 2020.

**Streetside Live:** Streetside Live is a musical arts program designed to enhance and re-animate the downtown core during the pandemic. The program positions musicians in cargo beds of 2 vintage pickup trucks in various locations around the downtown core to offer free musical performances daily from Aug. 24, 2020 to Aug. 31, 2020. Performances would be approximately 1 hour in length.

**City of Stratford Mayor Dan Mathieson stated:** *"These projects and initiatives are a key step forward on our road to recovery and I especially thank the Builders Association for their important support. I'm looking forward to getting out on a patio, with proper distancing and measures in place of course, and I encourage everyone to do the same. We need to support our local economy more than ever."*

**investStratford CEO Joani Gerber stated** *"I am so pleased with the speed and efficiency with which our Council, City Staff, Task force and area businesses are adapting and pivoting to adjust to COVID-19 realities. These projects are exciting and unique, and I believe, have the potential to bring about positive opportunities in our community."*

Funding for the approved projects is provided by a recent \$400K FedDev Ontario Canadian Experiences Fund (CEF), RTO4 and administered by investStratford for the City of Stratford's Economic Response and Recovery Task Force. The funding is directed to help mitigate damages incurred to the area due to COVID-19 and the resulting drop in tourism revenues for local businesses.

The Task Force continues to develop previously announced complementary projects including Stratford "Al Fresco", and The Circles Project within "Stratford en Plein Air" that strive to help the local tourism sector navigate the economic challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. For full list of activities visit [www.investstratford.com/taskforce](http://www.investstratford.com/taskforce)

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About investStratford

investStratford is committed to advancing the economic future of Stratford, Ontario, Canada through investment in arts, education and industry. Globally Connected | Community Driven [www.investStratford.com](http://www.investStratford.com)

About Stratford Economic Response and Recovery Task Force (SERRTF)

Coordinated by investStratford, the SERRTF is a unique partnership of business-facing organizations which include Stratford & District Chamber of Commerce, Stratford Tourism Alliance, Stratford City Centre BIA, United Way Perth-Huron and the Stratford Perth Museum. The Task Force mandate is to create the best recovery strategy for the City of Stratford.

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