



MEDIA RELEASE

\$750,000 IN FEDERAL FUNDING AWARDED TO INVESTSTRATFORD FOR CITY OF STRATFORD TOURISM RECOVERY

*investStratford to Administer Funds for new **Stratford Tourism Alteration Transformation Project***

Stratford, ON – Sept 18, 2020... **Today the City of Stratford confirmed they will receive \$750,000 from the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario to aid in Stratford's tourism recovery.** The new recovery project, entitled *Stratford Tourism Alteration Transformation Project* (STAT) will be administered by investStratford for the Economic Response and Recovery Task Force and aid Stratford businesses who have been impacted by the decline in tourism in the City of Stratford. The STAT Project is supported by the Government of Canada through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario and has been designed to support an efficient and effective recovery in the tourism sector from the negative impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEEDCo), through 3rd party delivery agreements, will partner with the City of Stratford, Stratford Tourism Alliance, Stratford City Centre Committee (BIA) and the Stratford & District Chamber of Commerce to provide non-repayable contributions of **\$7,500 and up to \$20,000** to support one-time adaptation and re-opening costs incurred by tourism-oriented SMEs and NFPs. Eligible projects and costs include:

- implementation of health and safety protocols
- alterations to accommodate social distancing (e.g. expansion of patio space for restaurants, acquisition of outdoor heaters, etc.)
- purchase of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for workers and cleaning supplies for businesses;
- digital tools and transformations for tourism operators (virtual queuing, timed-entry ticketing, etc.)

Eligible businesses include existing (in operation prior to Jan 31, 2020) sole proprietors, partnerships and corporations, registered with Canada Revenue Agency, and incorporated non-profits with eligible contributions available between **\$7,500 and \$20,000**. Activities are net new to the business and must be related to the adaption of new COVID-19 protocols or practices, sustaining or growing revenues and ensuring long-term stability.

Applications will be assessed based on eligible expenditures & project scope, tourism-related job creation & jobs maintained, how the project strengthens the business in COVID-19 realities and how the project ensures long-term sustainability. Priority will be given to businesses located within the City of Stratford. Further details re: eligibility, submission dates and requirements available on investstratford.com/STAT

Mayor Dan Mathieson stated *"I'm tremendously grateful to the Government of Canada and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario for this crucial support during these difficult economic times. Stratford's businesses have been hit hard by the decline of tourism and this grant will provide much-needed support for those struggling to re-open and/or remain open. Our community is working hard to adapt so that we can come out of this stronger than ever before."*

Joani Gerber, CEO of investStratford stated *"Stratford's business community is comprised of some of the most creative and resilient individuals you can imagine. This financial boost will provide them an essential leg-up in these difficult times. I'm very pleased FedDev has recognized our need and know that our businesses will benefit greatly from the funds both short and long-term."*

The City of Stratford's Economic Response & Recovery task force meets weekly. To submit economic recovery ideas, feedback and to learn more about membership, objectives and activities, please visit www.investstratford.com/taskforce.

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 For more info visit: investStratford.com

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