



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF STRATFORD**

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## **City of Stratford Announces COVID-19 Economic Support and Recovery Task Force**

**Stratford** – The City of Stratford is working with the business community to spearhead a special COVID-19 Economic Support and Recovery Task Force that will develop immediate and long-term actions to support local industry, small business and the workforce across all sectors.

Co-ordinated by investStratford, the task force will bring together a number of partners, including the Stratford & District Chamber of Commerce, Stratford Tourism Alliance, the Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area, local employers and businesses, Employment Ontario and others. Communications will be the top priority, and will involve the sharing of information online, through social channels and video updates.

In the short-term, the task force will focus on sharing information with the following groups:

### **Business Community At Large**

- Ongoing updates and communications; conference calls; sharing of information
- Links to Federal and Provincial government websites
- Recommendations to City Council for deferrals of interest and penalties on payments for property tax installments, water and hydro and other City-provided services

### **Entrepreneurs and Small Business**

- The Stratford-Perth Centre for Business is increasing consultations
  - \* one-one time with business specialists to discuss response, recovery and small business needs in the short term.
  - \* online content (website and Facebook) is being loaded daily and is free to view.
- Perth Community Futures Development Corporation – community loan programs

## **Recently unemployed workforce**

- Federal Employment Insurance programs – standard, self-employed, caregivers
- Expansion of Ontario Works and emergency supports for our most vulnerable
- Recommendations to Council for deferrals of interest and penalties on payments for property tax installments, water and hydro and other City-provided services
- Online and virtual employment training and skills development via Partners in Employment and Conestoga College

“Public health and safety are the number one priority today, but we will recover,” said Mayor Dan Mathieson. “Work has begun on longer-term economic strategies. With our partners, we’ll focus on sectors hit hardest, working to unlock large project funding from all levels of government and lobbying for what our businesses need most.”

“While the current health crisis is evolving rapidly and the ultimate impact remains unknown, investStratford, the City and its economic development support partners are committed to ensuring the economic health and wellbeing of area citizens, businesses and industries,” added investStratford CEO Joani Gerber.

For more information about the task force, please contact:

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